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**ADAM AND EVE**

**BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOROTHY FOX"**

**IN THREE VOLUMES**

**VOLUME III**

**LONDON: RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON**

**1880**

**Publishers in ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen**

**CHAPTER I.**

[1]

By the time Reuben May entered the little town of Looe, he had come to a decision about his movements, and how he should carry out his plan of getting back to London. Not going with Captain Triggs, for the monotonous inaction of a sailing voyage would

now be insupportable to him; but by walking as far as he could, and now and then, whenever it was possible, endeavouring to get a cheap lift on the road. His

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first step must therefore be to inform Triggs of his decision, and to do this he must get back to Plymouth, a distance from Looe of some fifteen or sixteen miles.

In going through Looe that morning, he had stopped for a few minutes at a small inn which stood not far from the beach; and having now crossed the river which divides West from East Looe, he began looking about for this house, intending to get some refreshment, to rest for an hour or so, and then proceed on his journey.

Already the town clock was striking six, and Reuben calculated that if he started between nine and ten, he should have time to take another good rest on the road—which he had already once that day traversed—and reach Plymouth Barbican, where the Mary Jane lay, by daybreak.

The inn found, he ordered his meal, and informed the landlady of his intention.

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‘Why, do ’ee stop here till mornin’, then!’ exclaimed the large-hearted Cornish woman. ‘If ’tis the matter o’ the money,’ she added, eyeing him critically, ‘that’s hinderin’ ’ee from it, it needn’t to, for I’ll see us don’t have no quarrel ’bout the price o’ the bed.’

Reuben assured her that choice, not necessity, impelled his onward footsteps; and thus satisfied, she bade him ‘Take and lie down on the settle there inside the barparlour; for,’ she added, ‘less ’tis the sergeant over fra Liskeard, ’tain’t likely you’ll be disturbed no ways; and I shall be in and out to see you’ m all right.’

Reuben stretched himself out, and, overcome by the excitement and fatigue of the day, was soon asleep and dreaming of those happier times when he and Eve had walked as friends together. Suddenly some one seemed to speak her name, and though the

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name at once wove itself into the movement of the dream, the external sound had aroused the sleeper, and he opened his eyes to see three men sitting near, talking over their grog.

With just enough consciousness to allow of his noticing that one was a soldier and the other two were sailors, Reuben looked for a minute, then closed his eyes, and was again sinking back into sleep, when the name of Eve was repeated, and this time with such effect that all Reuben's senses seemed to quicken into life, and cautiously opening his eyes, so as to look without being observed, he saw that it was the soldier who was speaking.

'Young chap, thinks I,' he was saying, 'you little fancy there's one so near who's got your sweetheart's seal dangling to his fob;' and with an air of self-satisfied vanity, he held out for inspection a curious little

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seal, which Keuben at once recognised as the same which he himself had given to Eve. The unexpected sight came upon him with such surprise, that, had not the height of the little table served as a screen to shelter him from view, his sudden movement must have betrayed his wakefulness.

'He's a nice one for any woman to be tied to, he is,' replied the younger of the two sailors. 'Why, the only time as I ever had what you may call a fair look at un, was one night in to the King o' Proosia's, and there he was dealing out his soft sawdor to little Nancy Lagassick, as if he couldn't live a minute out o' her sight.'

'That's about it,' laughed the soldier. 'He's one of your own sort there; you Jacks are all alike, with a wife in every port. However,' he added, and as he spoke he gave a complacent stroke to his good-looking face—'he may thank his

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stars that a matter of seven miles or so lays between his pretty Eve and Captain Van Courtland's troop, or there'd have been a cutting-out expedition that, saving the

presence of those I speak before,—and he gave a most exasperating wink—‘might have proved a trifle more successful than such things have of late.’

‘Here, I say,’ said the sailor, flaming up at this ill-timed jocularitv, ‘p’rap’s you’ll tell me what ’tis you’re drivin’ at; for I’ve got to hear of it if you, or any o’ your cloth either, ever made a find yet. You’re mighty ’cute ’bout other folks, though when the spirits was under yer very noses, and you searched the houses through ’twas knowed to be stowed in, you couldn’t lay hold on a single cask. ’Tis true we mayn’t have nabbed the men, but by jingo if ’t has come to us bein’ made fools of by the women!’

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‘There now, stash it there,’ said his older comrade, who had no wish to see a quarrel ensue. ‘So far as I can see, there’s no cause for bounce ’twixt either o’ us: though, only you give us a chance of getting ner to them, sergeant,’ he said, turning to the soldier, ‘and I’ll promise you shall make it all square with this pretty lass you fancy, while her lover’s cutting capers under Tyburn tree.’

‘A chance!’ repeated his companion, despondingly; ‘where’s it to come from, and the only one we’d got cut away from under us by those *Hart* chaps?’

‘How so, where’s the *Hart* off to, then?’ asked the sergeant.

‘Off to Port Mellint,’ said the man addressed. ‘Nothing but a hoax, I fancy; but still she was bound to go,’ and so saying he tossed off the remainder of his grog, and began making a movement, saying, as he

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did so, to his somewhat quarrelsome disponded shipmate: ‘Here, I say, Bill, come long down to the *rendezvoos* with me, and if there’s nothin’ up for to-night, what d’ye say to stepping round to Paddy Burke’s? he’s asked us to come ever so many times, you know.

‘Paddy Burke!’ said the sergeant; ‘what, do you know him? why, if you’re going there, I’ll step so far with you.’

‘Well, we’re bound for the *rendezvoos* first,’ said the sailor.



‘All right; I can find plenty to do while your’e in there.’

‘Then come along;’ and only stopping to exchange a few words in passing with the landlady, out they all went, and Reuben was left alone, a prey to the thoughts which now came crowding into his mind.

For a few minutes he sat with his arms resting on the table, as if communing with

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himself; then, starting up as if filled with a sudden resolve, he went out and asked the landlady a few commonplace questions, and finally inquired whereabouts, and in what direction, did the *rendezvous* lie?

‘Close down by the bridge, the first house after you pass the second turning. Why?’ she said; ‘be ’ee wanting to see anybody there?’

‘No,’ said Reuben; ‘I only heard the fellows that came in there talking about the *rendezvous*, and I wondered whether I’d passed it.’

‘Why, iss, o’ course you did, comin’ in.

‘Tis the house with the flag streamin’ over the doorways.’

Reuben waited for no further information. He said something about not knowing it was so late, bade the landlady a rather abrupt farewell, and went his way.

Down the narrow street he hurried,

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turned a corner, and found himself in front of the house indicated, outside which all was dark. Nobody near, and, with the exception of himself, not a soul to be seen.

Inside, he could hear voices, and the more plainly from the top sash of the window being a little way open. By the help of the iron stanchion driven in to support the flag-staff, he managed to get up, steady himself on the window-sill, and take a survey of the room. Several men were in it, and among them the two he had already seen, one of whom was speaking to a person whom, from his uniform, Reuben took to be an officer.

The sight apparently decided what he had before hesitated about, and getting down, he took from his pocket a slip of paper—one he had provided in case he should want to leave a message for Eve—and rapidly wrote on it these words:

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‘The *Lottery* is expected at Polperro tonight. They will land at Down End as soon as the tide will let them get near.’

Folding this, he once more mounted the window-sill, tossed the paper into the room, lingered for but an instant to see that it was picked up, then jumped down, ran with all speed, and was soon lost amid the darkness which surrounded him.

As he hurried from the house, an echo seemed to carry to his ears the shout which greeted this surprise—a surprise which set every one talking at once, each one speaking and no one listening. Some were for going, some for staying away; some for treating it as a serious matter, others for taking it as a joke.

At length the officer called ‘Silence!’ and after a pause, addressing the men present in a few words, he said that however

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it might turn out, he considered that he should only be doing his duty by ordering the boats to proceed to the place named, and see what amount of truth there was in this somewhat mysterious manoeuvre. If it was nothing but a hoax, they must bear to have the laugh once more turned against them; but should it turn out the truth! The buzz which greeted this bare supposition showed how favourably his decision was regarded, and the absent men were ordered to be summoned without delay. Everything was got ready as quickly as possible, and in little over an hour two boats started, fully equipped and manned, to lie in ambush near the coast midway between Looe and Polperro.

While fate, in the shape of Reuben May, had been hastening events towards a disastrous climax, the course of circumstances in Polperro had not gone altogether

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smoothly. To Eve's vexation, because of the impossibility of speaking of her late encounter with Reuben May, she found, on her return home, that during her absence Mrs. Tucker had arrived, with the rare and unappreciated announcement that she had come to stop and have her tea with them. The example set by Mrs. Tucker was followed by an invitation to two or three other elderly friends, so that between her hospitality and her excitement, Joan had no opportunity of noticing any undue change in Eve's manner or appearance. Two or three remarks were made on her pale face and abstracted air, but this more by the way of teasing than anything else; while Joan, remembering the suppressed anxiety she was most probably trying to subdue, endeavoured to come to her aid, and assist in turning away this overscrutiny of her tell-tale appearance.

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The opportunity thus afforded by silence gave time for reflection, and Eve, who had never been quite straightforward or very explicit about herself and Reuben May, now began to hesitate. Perhaps, after all, it would be better to say nothing; for Joan was certain to ask questions which, without betraying the annoyance she had undergone, Eve hardly saw her way to answering. Again, it was not impossible but that Reuben's anger might relent; and if so, he would most probably seek another interview, in which to beg her pardon.

In her heart Eve hoped and believed this would be the case; for, indignantly as she had defied Reuben's scorn and flung back his reproaches, they had been each a separate sting to her, and she longed for the chance to be afforded Reuben of seeing how immeasurably above

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the general run of men was the one she had chosen.

'Here, I say, Eve!' exclaimed Joan, as she came indoors from bidding good-bye to the last departure. 'Come, bear a hand and let's set the place all straight; I can't abide the men's coming home to find us all in a muddle.'

Eve turned to with a good will, and the girls soon had the satisfaction of seeing the room look as bright and cheery as they desired.

'Let's see—ten minutes past 'leben,' said Joan, looking at the clock. 'I don't see how 'tis possible for 'em to venture in 'fore wan, 'less 'tis to Yallow Rock, and they'd hardly try that. What do 'ee say. Eve — shall we run up out to cliff, top o' Talland Lane, and see if us can see any signs of 'em?'

'Oh, do, Joan!'

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And, throwing their cloaks over them, off they set.

'Here, give me your hand,' said Joan, as they reached the gate and entered upon the path which Eve had last trod with Adam by her side. 'I know the path better than you, and 'tis a bit narrow for a pitch-dark night like this. Take care, we'm come to the watter; that's right. Now up we goes till we get a-top, and then we'll have a good look round us.'

Thus instructed, Eve managed to get on, and, stumbling up by Joan's side, they quickly reached the narrow line of level which seemed to overhang the depths below.

'We couldn't see them if they were there,' said Eve, turning to Joan, who was still peering into the darkness.

'No, 'tis blacker than I thought,' said Joan, cheerily; 'that's ever so much help to 'em, and, hooray! the fires is out! Do

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'ee see, Eve? there ain't a spark o' nothin', nowheres. Ole Jonathan's hoaxed 'em fine this time; the gawpuses have sooked it all in, and, I'll be bound, raced off so fast as wind and tide 'ud carry 'em.'

'Then they're sure to come, now?' said Eve, excitedly.

'Certain,' said Joan. 'They've seed the fires put out, and know it means the bait's swallowed, and the cruiser is off. I shouldn't wonder a bit if they'm close in shore, only

waitin' for the tide to give 'em a proper draw o' water, so that they may send the kegs over.'

'Should we go on a bit farther,' said Eve, 'and get down the hill by the Warren stile? We might meet some of 'em, perhaps.'

'Better not,' said Joan. 'To tell 'ee the truth, 'tis best to make our way home so quick as can, for I wudnt' say

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us 'ull have 'em back quicker than I thought.'

'Then, let's make haste!' exclaimed Eve, giving her hand to Joan, while she turned her head to take a farewell glance in the direction where it was probable the vessel was now waiting. 'Oh, Joan! What's that?' For a fiery arrow had seemed to shoot along the darkness, and in quick succession came another and another.

Joan did not answer; but she seemed to catch her breath, and, clutching hold of Eve, she made a spring up on to the wall over which they had before been looking. And now a succession of sharp cracks were heard, then the tongues of fire darted through the air, and again all was gloom.

'O Lord' groaned Joan; 'I hope 'tain't nothin's gone wrong with 'em.' In an instant Eve had scrambled up by her side.

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'What can it be? What could go wrong, Joan?'—but Joan's whole attention seemed now centred on the opposite cliff, from where, a little below Hard Head, after a few minutes' watching, Eve saw a blue light burning; this was answered by another lower down, then a rocket was sent up, at sight of which Joan clasped her hands, and cried:

'Awh, 'tis they! 'tis they! Lord save 'em! Lord help 'em! They cursed hounds have surely played 'em false!'

'What, not taken them, Joan?'

'They won't be taken,' she said fiercely.

‘Do you think, unless ’twas over their dead bodies, they’d ever let king’s men stand masters on the *Lottery’s* deck?’

Eve’s heart died within her, and with one rush every detail of the lawless life seemed to come before her.

‘There they go again!’ cried Joan, and

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this time, by the sound, she knew their position was altered to westward, and somewhat nearer into land. ‘Lord send they mayn’t know their course,’ she continued; ‘’tis but a point or two on, and they’ll surely touch the Steeple Reef. Awh, you blidthirsty cowards! I wish I’d the pitchin’ of every man of ’ee overboards; ’tis precious little mercy you’d get from me! And the blessed sawls to be caught in yer snarin’ traps close into home—anighst their very doors, too. Eve, I must go and see what they means to do for ’em. They’ll never suffer to see ’em butchered whilst there’s a man in Polperro to go out and help ’em.’

Forgetting in her terror all the difficulties she had before seen in the path, Eve managed to keep up with Joan, whose flying footsteps never stayed until she found herself in front of a long building, close under shelter of the Peak, which had

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been named as a sort of assembling-place in case of danger.

‘’Tis they?’ she called out, in breathless agony, pushing her way through the crowd of men now hastening up from all directions towards the captain of the *Cleopatra*.

‘I’m feared so,’ and his grave face bespoke how fraught with anxiety his fears were.

‘What can it be, d’ee think?’

‘Can’t tell nowadays. They who brought us word saw the *Hart* sail, and steady watch has been kept up, so that us knows her ain’t back.’

‘You mains to do somethin’ for ’em?’ said Joan.

‘Never fear but us’ll do what us can— though that’s mighty little, I can tell ’ee, Joan.’

Joan gave an impatient groan. Her thorough comprehension of their danger

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and its possible consequences lent activity to her distress, while Eve, with nothing more tangible than the knowledge that a terrible danger was near, seemed the prey to indefinite horrors, which took away from her every sense but the sense of suffering.

By this time the whole place was astir, people running to this point and that, asking questions, listening to rumours, hazarding a hundred conjectures, each more wild than the other. A couple of boats had been manned ready to row round by the cliff. One party had gone towards the Warren, another to Yellow Bock.

All were filled with the keenest desire not only to aid their comrades, but to be revenged on those who had snared them into this cunningly-devised pitfall. But amid all this zeal arose the question:

What could they do?

Absolutely nothing—for by this time the

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firing had ceased, the contest was apparently over, and around them impenetrable darkness again reigned supreme.

To show any lights by which some point of land should be discovered might only serve as a beacon to the enemy. To send out a boat might be to run it into their very jaws, for surely, were assistance needed, those on board the *Lottery* would know that by this time trusty friends were anxiously watching, waiting for but the slightest signal to be given to risk life and limb in their service.

The wisest thing to be done was to put everything in order for a sudden call, and then sit down and patiently abide the result. This decision being put into effect, the excited crowd began to thin, and before long, with the exception of those who could render assistance, very few lookers-on remained. Joan had lingered till the last,

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and then, urged by the possibility that many of her house-comforts might be needed, she hurried home to join Eve, who had gone before her.

With their minds running upon all the varied accidents of a fight, the girls, without exchanging a word of their separate fears, got ready what each fancied might prove the best remedy, until, nothing more being left to do, they sat down, one on each side the fire, and counted the minutes by which time dragged out this weary watching into hours.

‘Couldn’t ’ee say a few hymns or somethin’, Eve?’ Joan said at length, with a hope of breaking this dreadful monotony.

Eve shook her head.

‘No?’ said Joan, disappointedly. ‘I thought you might ha’ knowed o’ some.’ Then, after another pause, struck by a happier suggestion, she said: ‘S’pose us

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was to get down the big Bible and read a bit, eh—what do ’ee say?’

But Eve only shook her head again.

‘No,’ she said, in a hard dry voice. ‘I couldn’t read the Bible now.’

‘Couldn’t ’ee?’ sighed Joan. ‘Then, after all, it don’t seem that religion and that’s much of a comfort. By what I’d heard,’ she added, ‘I thought ’twas made o’ purpose for folks to lay hold on in times o’ trouble.’

## CHAPTER II.

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It was close upon three o’clock; Joan had fallen into an uneasy doze, and Eve was beginning to nod, when a rattle of the latch made them both start up.

‘It can’t be—iss, it is, though!’ screamed Joan, rushing forward to meet Adam, who caught both the girls in a close embrace.

‘Uncle? uncle?’ Joan cried.

‘All safe,’ said Adam, releasing her, while he strained Eve closer to his heart. ‘We’re all back safe and sound, and, saving



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Tom Braddon and Israel Rickard, without a scratch 'pon any of us.'

'Thank God!' sighed Eve; while Joan, verily jumping for joy, cried :

'But where be they to, eh, Adam? I must rin, where ever 'tis, and see 'em, and make sure of it with my awn eyes.'

'I left them down to quay with the rest —they're all together there' said Adam, unwilling to lose the opportunity of securing a few minutes alone with Eve, and yet unable to command his voice, so that it should sound in its ordinary tone. The jar in it caught Joan's quick ear, and, turning, she said:

'Why, whatever have 'ee bin about, then? What's the mainin' of it all? Did they play 'ee false, or how?'

Adam gave a puzzled shake of the head.

'You know quite as much about it as I do,' he said. 'We started, and got on fair and

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right enough so far as Down End, and I was for at once dropping out the "kegs," as had been agreed upon to do. at Sandy Bottom.'

'Well?' said Joan.

'Yes,' twould ha' been well if we'd done it. I'stead of which, no sooner was the fires seen to be out, meaning, as all thought, that the *Hart* was safe off, than nothing would do but we must go on to Yellow Rock, which meant waiting for over an hour till the tide served for it.'

'But you never gived in to 'em, Adam?'

'Gived in!' he repeated bitterly; 'after Jerrem had once put the thought into their heads you might so well have tried to turn stone walls as get either one to lay a finger on anything. They wanted to know what was the good o' taking the trouble to sink the kegs overboard, when by just waitin' we could store all safe in the caves along there—under cliff.'

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‘Most half drunk, I s’pose?’ said Joan.

‘By Jove! then they’d pretty soon something to make ’em sober,’ replied Adam, grimly; ‘for in little more than half-an-hour we spied the two boats comin’ up behind us, and ’fore they was well caught sight of, they’d opened out fire.’

‘And had’ee got to return it?’ asked Joan.

‘Not till they were close up, we didn’t, and then I b’lieve the sight of us would have been enough; only, as usual, Mr. Jerrem must be on the contrary, and let fly a shot that knocked down the bow-oar of the foremost boat like a nine-pin. That got up their blood a bit, and then at it our chaps went, tooth and nail—such a scrimmage as hasn’t been seen hereabouts since the *Happy-go-Lucky* was took, and Welland shot in her.’

‘Lord save us! however did ’ee manage to get off so well?’ said Joan.

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‘Get off!’ he said; ‘why, we could have made a clean sweep of the whole lot, and all the cry against me now is that I kept ’em from doing it. The fools! not to see that our best chance is to do nothing more than defend ourselves and not run our necks into a noose by taking life while there’s any help for it.’

‘Was the man shot dead that Jerrem fired at?’ asked Eve.

‘No, I hope not; or, if so, we haven’t heard the last of it; for, depend on it, this new officer, Buller, he’s an ugly customer to deal with, and won’t take things quite so easy as old Ravens used to do.’

‘You’ll be faintin’ for somethin’ to eat,’ said Joan, moving towards the kitchen.

‘No, I ain’t,’ said Adam, laying a detaining hand upon her. ‘I couldn’t touch a thing; I want to be a bit quiet, that’s all. My head seems all of a miz-maze like.’

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‘Then I’ll just run down and see uncle,’ said Joan, ‘and try and persuade ’em to come home alongs, shall I?’

Adam gave an expressive movement of his face.

‘You can try,’ he said, ‘but you haven’t got much chance o’ bringin’ him, poor old chap! He thinks, like the rest of ’em, that they’ve done a fine night’s work, and they must keep it up by drinking to blood and glory. I only hope it may end there, but if it doesn’t, whatever comes, Jerrem’s the one who’s got to answer for it all.’

While he was saying these words, Adam was pulling off his jacket, and now went to the kitchen to find some water with which to remove the black and dirt from his begrimed face and hands.

Eve hastened to assist him, but not before Joan had managed, by laying her finger on her lip, to attract her attention.

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‘For goodness gracious sake,’ she whispered, ‘don’t ’ee brathe no word ’bout the letter to un; there’d be worse than morder ’twixt ’em now.’

Eve nodded an assurance of silence, and opening the door, Joan went out into the street, already alive with people, most of them bent on the same errand as herself, anxious to hear the incidents of the fight confirmed by the testimony of the principal actors.

The gathering-point was the sail-house behind the Peak, and thither, in company with several friends, Joan made her way, and soon found herself hailed with delight by Uncle Zebedee and Jerrem, both of whom were by this time primed up to giving the most extraordinary and vivid accounts of the fight, every detail of which was entirely corroborated by those who had been present and those who had been

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absent; for the constant demand made on the keg of spirits which, in honour of the *victory*, old Zebedee had insisted on having broached there, was beginning to take effect, so that the greater portion of listeners were now turned into talkers, and thus it was impossible to tell those who had seen from those who had heard, and the wrangling, laughter, disputes, and congratulations made such a hubbub of confufusion that the room seemed for the time turned into a very Pandemonium.

Only one thing all gave hearty assent to—that was that Jerrem was the hero on whom the merit of triumph rested; for, if he hadn't fired that first shot, ten to one but they should have listened to somebody whom, in deference to Zebedee, they refrained from naming, and indicated by a nod in his direction, and let the whitelivered scoundrels sneak off with the boast

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that the Polperro men were afraid to give fight to them. Afraid! why, they were afraid of nothing, not they! They'd give chase to the *Hart*, board the Looe cutter, swamp the boats, and utterly rout and destroy the whole Excise department; the more bloodthirsty the resolution i proposed, the louder was it greeted.

The spirit of lawless riot seemed suddenly let loose among them, and men who were usually kind-hearted and, after their rough fashion, tenderly-disposed, seemed turned into devils, whose delight was in violence, and whose pleasure was excess.

While this revelry was growing more fast and furious below, Adam was still sitting quietly at home, with Eve by his side using her every art to dispel the gloom by which her lover's spirits were clouded—not so much on account of the recent fight, for Adam apprehended no such great score

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of danger on that head. It was true that of late such frays had been of rare occurrence, yet many had taken place before, and with disastrous results, and yet the chief actors in them still lived to tell the tale; so that it was not altogether that which disturbed him, although it greatly added to his former moodiness, which had originally sprung out of the growing distaste to the life he led. The inaction of the time spent in dodging about, with nothing to occupy him, nothing to interest him, had turned Adam's thoughts inward, and made him determine to have done with these ventures, in which, except as far as the gain went, he really had nothing in common with the companions who took part in them; but as he very well knew, it was far easier to take this resolution in thought than it was to put it into action. Once let the idea of his leaving them get abroad, and

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difficulties would confront him whichever way he turned; obstacles would block his path, and suspicion dodge his footsteps.

His comrades, though not very far-seeing men, were quite sharp enough to estimate the danger of losing sight of one who was in possession of all their secrets, and who could at any moment lay his finger upon every hiding-place in their district.

Adam himself had often listened to, and, in company with others, silently commended, a story told of years gone by, when a brother of the owner of the *Stamp and Go*, one Herkles Johns, had been pressed into the king's service, and had there acquitted himself so gallantly that, on his return, a commission had been offered to him, which he, longing to take, accepted under condition of getting leave to see his native place again. With the foreboding that the exchange of circumstances would not be

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well received, he seized the opportunity occasioned by the joy of his return to speak of the commission as a reward offered to him, and asked the advice of those around as to whether he had not best accept it.

Opposition met him on every side. 'What!' they said, 'of his own free-will, put himself in a place where some day he might be forced to seize his father's vessel, or swear away the lives of those he had been born among!' The bare idea was inadmissible; and when, from asking advice, he grew into giving his opinion, and finally into announcing his decision, an ominous silence fell on those who heard him, and though he was unmolested during his stay, and permitted to leave his former home, he was never known to reach his ship, aboard which his mysterious disappearance was much talked of, and inquiries set afloat to find out the reason of his absence; but among those whose name

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he bore, and whose confidence he had shared, he seemed to be utterly forgotten.

His name was never mentioned, nor his fate inquired into; and Adam, remembering that he had seen the justice of this treatment, felt the full force of its reasoning now applied to his own case, and his heart sank before the difficulties in which he found himself entangled.

Even to Eve he could not open out his mind clearly, for, unless to one born and bred among them, the dangers and interests of the free-traders was a matter quite beyond comprehension; so that now, when Eve was pleading, with all her powers of persuasion, that for her sake Adam would give up this hfe of reckless daring, the seemingly deaf ear he turned to her entreaties was dulled through perplexity, and not, as she believed, from obstinacy.

Eve, in her turn, could not be thoroughly

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explicit. There was a skeleton cupboard, the key of which she was hiding from Adam's sight; for it was not entirely 'for her sake' she desired him to abandon his present occupation: it was because, in the anxiety she had recently undergone, in the terror which had been forced upon her, the glaze of security had been roughly dispelled, and the life, in all its lawlessness and violence, had stood forth before her. The warnings and denunciations which only a few hours before, when Reuben May had uttered them, she had laughed to scorn as idle words, now rang in her ears hke a fatal knell; the rope he had said would hang them all was then a sieve of unsown hemp—since sprung up, and now the fatal cord which dangled dangerously near.

The secret thoughts of each fell like a shadow between them; an invisible hand seemed to thrust them asunder, and, in spite

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of the love they both felt, both were equally conscious of a want of that entire sympathy which is the keystone to perfect union.

'You *were* very glad to see me come back to you, Eve?' Adam asked, as, tired of waiting for Joan, Eve at length decided to sit up no longer.

‘Glad, Adam! Why do you ask?’

‘I can’t tell, he said.’ I s’pose it’s this confounded upset of everything that makes me feel as I do feel, as if,’ he added, passing his hand over his forehead, ‘I hadn’t a bit of trust or hope or comfort in anything in the world.’

‘I know exactly’, said Eve. ‘That’s just as I felt when we were waiting for you to come back. Joan asked if we should read the Bible, but I said no; I couldn’t, I felt too wicked for that.’

‘Wicked!’ said Adam. ‘Why, what should make you feel wicked?’

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Eve hesitated. Should she unburden her heart, and confess to him all the fears and scruples which made it feel so heavy and ill at ease? A moment’s indecision, and, the opportunity lost, she said in a dejected tone:

‘Oh, I cannot tell; only that I suppose such thoughts come to all of us sometimes.’

Adam looked at her, but Eve’s eyes were averted; and seeing how pale and troubled was the expression on her face, he said:

‘You are over- tired; all this turmoil has been too much for you. Go off now, and try to get some sleep. Yes; don’t stay up longer,’ he added, seeing that she hesitated.

‘I shall be glad of some rest myself, and to-morrow we shall find things looking better than they seem to do now.’

Once alone, Adam reseated himself, and sat gazing abstractedly into the fire; then with an effort he seemed to try and shake

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his senses together, to step out of himself and put his mind into a working order of thought, so that he might weigh and sift the occurrences of these recent events.

The first question which had flashed into everybody’s mind was, what had led to this sudden attack? Had they been betrayed? and, if so, who had betrayed them? Could it be Jonathan? Though the thought wa& at once negatived, no other outsider knew of their intended movements. Of course, the matter had been discussed—as all matters were

discussed and voted for or against—among the crew; but to doubt either of them was to doubt one's self, and any fear of betrayal among themselves was unknown. The amount of baseness such a suspicion would imply was too great to be incurred even in thought. What, then, could have led to this surprise? Had their movements been

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watched, and this decoy of the cutter only swallowed with the view of throwing them off their guard? Adam was lost in speculation, from which he was aroused by the door beings softly opened and Joan coming in.

'Why, Adam, I thought to find 'ee in bed,' she said. 'Come, now, you must be dreadful tired.' Then, sitting down to loosen her hood, she added with a sigh, 'I stayed down there so long as I could, till I saw 'twasn't no good, so I corned away home and left 'em. 'Tis best way, I b'lieve.'

'I knew 'twas no good your going,' said Adam, hopelessly. 'I saw before I left 'em what they'd made up their minds to.'

'Well, perhaps there's a little excuse this time,' said Joan, not willing to blame those who were so dear to her; 'but, Adam,' she broke out, while her face bespoke her

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keen appreciation of his superiority: 'Why can't th'others be like you, aw, my dear? how different things 'ud be if they only was.'

Adam shook his head.

'Oh, don't wish 'em like me,' he said. 'I often wish I could take my pleasure in the same things, and in the same way, that they do; I should be much happier, I b'lieve.'

'No, now, don't 'ee say that.'

'Why, what good has it done that I'm otherwise?'

'Why, ever so much; more than you'll ever know by a good bit. I needn't go no further than my awn self to tell 'ee that; p'r'aps you mayn't think it, but I've bin kep' fra doin' ever so many things by the thought o' what'll Adam say? and with the glass in my



hand I've set it down untasted, thinkin' to myself, "Now you'm actin'agen Adam's wish, you know."

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Adam smiled as he gave her a little shake of the hand.

'That's how 'tis, you see,' she continued; 'you'm doin good without knowin' of it.'

Then, turning her dark eyes wistfully upon him, she asked: 'Do 'ee ever think a bit 'pon poor Joan, while you'm away, Adam? Come, now, you mustn't shove off from me altogether, you know; you must leave me a dinkey little corner to *squeeze* into by.'

Adam clasped her hand tighter: 'Oh, Joan,' he said, 'I'd give the world to see my way clearer than I do now; I often wish that I could take you all off to some place far away, and begin life over again.'

'Ah!' said Joan, in a tone of sympathy to which her heart did not very cordially respond, 'that 'ud be a capital job, that would; but you ain't mainin' away from Polperro?'

'Yes, far away. I've bin thinkin' about it

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for a good bit: don't you remember I said something o' the sort to father a little time back?'

'Iss, but I didn't know there was any more sense to your words than to threaten un like. Awh, my dear!' she said, with a decided shake of the head, 'that 'ud never do; don't 'ee get hold o' such a thought as that. Turn your back upon the place! why, whatever 'd they be about to let 'ee do it?'

Joan's words only echoed Adam's own thoughts; still he tried to combat them by saying: 'I don't see why any one should interfere with what I might choose to do; what odds could it make to them?'

'Odds!' repeated Joan; 'why, you'd hold all their lives in your wan hand. Only ax yourself the question, where's either one of 'em you'd like to see take hisself off nobody knows why or where?'

Adam could find no satisfactory reply to

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this argument; he therefore changed the subject by saying:

‘I wish I could fathom this last business. ‘Tis a good deal out o’ the course o’ plain sailing. So far as I know by, there wasn’t a living soul but Jonathan who could have said what was up for to-night’

‘Jonathan’s right enough,’ said Joan, decidedly. ‘I should feel a good deal more mistrust ‘bout some of ‘em lettin’ their tongues rin too fast.’

‘There was nobody to let them run fast to,’ said Adam.

‘Then there’s the writin’,’ said Joan, trying to discover if Adam knew anything about Jerrem’s letter. Adam shook his head.

‘‘Tisn’t nothing o’ that sort,’ he said. ‘I don’t know that, beyond Jerrem and me, either o’ the others know how to write; and I said particular that I should send

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no word by speech or letter, and the rest must do the same; and Jonathan would ha’ told me if they’ d broke through in any way, for I put the question to him ‘fore he shoved off.’

‘Oh, did ‘ee?’ said Joan, turning her eyes away, while into her heart there crept a suspicion of Jonathan’s perfect honesty. Was it possible that his love of money might have led him to betray his old friends? Joan’s fears were aroused.

‘‘Tis a poor job of it’ she said, anxiously.

‘I wish to goodness’t had happened to any o’ the rest, so long as you and uncle was out of it.’

‘And not Jerrem?’ said Adam, with a feeble attempt at his old teasing.

‘Awh, Jerrem’s sure to fall ‘pon his feet, throw un which way you will,’ said Joan.

‘Besides, if he didn’t’—and she turned a look of reproach on Adam—‘Jerrem ain’t

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you, Adam, nor uncle neither. I don’t deny that I don’t love Jerrem dearly, ‘cos I do’—and for an instant her voice seemed to wrestle with the rush of tears which streamed

from her eyes as she sobbed—‘but for you or uncle, why, I’d shed my heart’s blood like watter, iss that I would, and not think ’twas any such great thing neither.’

‘There’s no need to tell me that,’ said Adam, whose heart, softened by his love or Eve, had grown very tender towards Joan. ‘Nobody knows you better than I do. There isn’t another woman in the whole world I’d trust with the things I’d trust you with, Joan.’

‘There’s a dear,’ said Joan, recovering herself. ‘It does me good to hear ’ee spake like that. ‘Tis such a time since I had a word with ’ee that I began to feel I don’t know how wise.’

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‘Well, yes, said Adam, smiling, ‘tis a bravish spell since you and me were together by our own two selves. But I declare your talk’s done me more good than anything I’ve had to-day. I feel ever so much better now than I did before.’

Joan was about to answer, when a sound made them both start and stand for a moment listening.

‘’Tis gone, whatever it was,’ said Adam, taking a step forward. ‘I don’t hear nothing now, do you?’

Joan pushed back the door leading to the stairs.

‘No,’ she said; ‘I reckon ’twas nothin but the boards. Howiver, ’tis time I went, or I shall be wakin’ up Eve. Her’s a poor sleeper in general, but what with wan thing and ’nother, I ’spects her’s reg’lar worn out, poor sawl, to-night.’

### CHAPTER III.

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Worn out and tired as she felt when she went upstairs, Eve’s mind was so excited by the day’s adventures that she found it impossible to lull her sharpened senses into anything like repose, and after hearing Joan come in she lay tossing and restless, wondering why it was she did not come up, and what could possibly be the cause of her stopping so long below.

As time went on her impatience grew into anxiety, vrhich in its turn became

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suspicion, until, unable longer to restrain herself, she got up, and, after listening with some evident surprise at the stairhead, cautiously stole down the stairs, and peeped through the chink left by the illfitting hinge of the door into the room.

‘There isn’t another woman in the whole world I’d trust with the things I’d trust you with, Joan,’ Adam was saying. Eve bent a trifle further forward. ‘You’ve done me more good than anything I’ve had to-day. I feel ever so much better now than I did before.’

An involuntary movement—giving a different balance to her position—made the stairs creak, and to avoid detection. Eve had to make a hasty retreat, and hurry back, so that when Joan came upstairs it was to find her, apparently, in such a profound sleep that there was little reason to fear any sound she might make would

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arouse her; but long after Joan had sunk to rest, and even Adam had forgotten his troubles and anxieties, Eve nourished and fed the canker of jealousy which had crept into her heart—a jealousy not directed towards Joan, but turned upon Adam for recalling to her mind that old grievance of not giving her his full trust.

At another time these speeches would not have come with half the importance; it would have been merely a vexation which a few sharp words would have exploded and put an end to, but now, combined with the untoward circumstances of situation—for Eve could not confess herself a listener—was the fact that her nerves, her senses, and her conscience seemed strained to a point which made each feather-weight appear a burden. Filled with that smart of wounded love, whose sweetest balm revenge seems to

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supply, Eve lay awake until the grey light of day had filled the room, and then, from sheer exhaustion, she fell into a doze which gradually deepened into a heavy sleep, so that when she again opened her eyes the sun was shining full and strong.

Starting up, she looked round for Joan; but Joan had been up for a couple of hours and more. She had arisen very stealthily, creeping about with the hope that Eve would not be disturbed by her movements, for Adam's great desire was that Eve's feelings should be in no way outraged by discovering either in Uncle Zebedee or in Jerrem traces of the previous night's debauch; and this, by Joan's help, was managed so well that when Eve made her appearance she was told that uncle Zebedee, tired, like herself, was not yet awake, while Jerrem, brisked up by several nips of raw spirit, was lounging about in a state of

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lassitude and depression, which might very well be attributed to reaction and fatigue. Perhaps, if Eve could have known that Adam was not present, she would have toned down the amount of cordiality she threw into her greeting of Jerrem, a greeting he accepted with such a happy adjustment of pleasure and gratitude, that to have shown a difference on the score of Adam's absence would have been to step back into their former unpleasant footing.

'Adam's gone out,' said Jerrem, in answer to the inquiring look Eve was sending round the kitchen.

'Oh, I wasn't looking for Adam,' said Eve, while the rush of vexed colour denied the assertion. 'I was wondering where Joan could be.'

'She was in here a minute ago,' said

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Jerrem, 'telling me 'twas a shame to be idlin' about so.'

'Why, are you still busy?' said Eve.

'No, nothin' to speak of, but what 'ull wait, and fit it should, 'till I'd spoken to you. Eve. I ain't like one who's got the chance o' comin' when he's minded to,' he added, 'or the grass wouldn't ha' had much chance o' growin' under my feet after once they'd felt the shore. No, now, don't look put out with me; I ain't goin' to ask ye to listen to nothin' you don't want to hear. I've tried to see the folly o' that while I've bin away,

and'tis all done with and pitched overboard; and that's what made me write that letter, 'cos I wanted us two to be like what we used to be, you know.'

'I wish you hadn't written that letter, though,' said Eve, only half inclined to credit Jerrem's assertions.

'Well, as things have turned out, so do

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I,' said Jerrem, who, although he did not confess it to himself, would have given all he possessed to feel quite certain Eve would keep his secret. 'You see, it's so awkward like, when everybody's tryin' to ferret out how this affair came about. You didn't happen to mention it to nobody, I s'pose?' and he turned a keen glance of inquiry towards Eve.

'Me mention it!' said Eve. 'I should think not. Joan can tell you how angry we both were, for of course we knew that unless Adam had some good cause he wouldn't have wished it kept so secret.'

'And do you think I should have quitted a word to any livin' soul but yourself?' exclaimed Jerrem. 'I haven't much sense in your eyes, I know. Eve, but you might give me the credit o' knowing who's to be trusted and who isn't.'

'What's that about trustin'?' said Joan,

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who now made her appearance. 'I tell 'ee what 'tis, Mr. Jerrem, you'm not to be trusted anyhow. Why, what could 'ee ha' bin thinkin' of to go sendin' that letter you did after Adam had spoke to 'ee all? There'd be a purty set out of it, you know, Jerrem, if the thing was to get winded about. I, for wan, shouldn't thank 'ee, I can tell 'ee, for gettin' my name mixed up with it, and me made nothin' better than a cat's-paw of!'

'Who's goin to wind it about?' said Jerrem, throwing his arm round her and drawing her coaxingly towards him. 'You ain't, and I ain't, and I'll answer for it Eve ain't; and so long as we three keep our tongues 'atween our teeth, who'll be the wiser—eh?'

'Awh, that's all very fine,' returned Joan, far from mollified, 'but there's a somebody hasn't a-kept their tongues

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silent; and who it can be beats me to tell. Did Jonathan know for certain 'bout the landin'? or was it only guess work with un?'

'I ain't sure—but Jonathan's safe enough,' said Jerrem; 'and so's the rest too; 'twarn't through no blabbin', take my word for that; 'twas a reg'lar right down set scheme from beginnin' to end, and that's why I should ha' liked to ha' give 'em a payin' out that they wouldn't ha' forgot in a hurry. I'd ha' scored their reckonin' for 'em, I can tell 'ee.'

'Awh! iss, I dare say,' said Joan, with scornful contempt; 'you allays thinks you knows better than they you'm bound to listen to. Howsomedever, when all's said and done, I shall finish with the same I began with—that you'd no right to send that letter '

'Well, you've told me that afore,' said Jerrem, sullenly.

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'Iss, and now I tells 'ee behind,' retorted Joan; 'and to front and to back and round all the sides, so there.'

'Oh, all right!' said Jerrem; 'have your talk out, it don't matter to me,' and he threw himself down on the settle with apparent unconcern, taking from his breast-pocket a letter which he carefully unfolded. 'Did you know that I'd got a letter gived me to Guernsey, Eve?' he said. 'One they'd ha' kept waitin' there for months for me.'

Eve looked up, and, to her vexation, saw Jerrem reading the letter which on her first arrival she had written; the back of it was turned towards her, so as to ostentatiously display the two splodges of red sealing-wax.

'Why, you doan't mane to say you've a got *he!*' exclaimed Joan, her anger completely giving way to her amazement.

'Well, I never, after all this long whiles,

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and us a tryin' to stop un, too! Eve, do 'ee see, he's a got the letter you writ, kisses and all.'

‘Joan,’ exclaimed Eve, in a tone of mingled reproof and annoyance, while Jerrem made a feint of pressing the impressions to his lips, casting the while a look in Eve’s direction, which Joan intercepting, she said:

‘Awh! iss I would—seeing they’m so much mine as Eve’s, and you doant know t’other from which.’

‘That’s all you can tell,’ said Jerrem.

‘Iss, and all you can tell, too,’ replied Joan, adding, as the frown on his face betokened rising anger, ‘there, my dear, you’d best step inside wi’ me, and get a drop more o’ your mornin’s physic, I reckon.’

‘Physic?’ growled Jerrem, ‘I don’t want no physic—least wise, no more than I’ve had from you already.’

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‘Glad to hear it,’ said Joan. ‘When you change your mind, which, depend on it, ’ull be afore long, you’ll find me close to hand. I must make up a few somethin’s for this evenin,’ she said, addressing Eve, ‘in case any of ’em drops in. Adam’s gone off,’ she added, ‘I don’t know where, nor he neither, till his work’s done.’

‘Might just so well have saved hisself the trouble,’ growled Jerrem.

‘No, now, he mightn’t,’ replied Joan.

‘There’s spurrits enough to wan place and ’tother to float a Injiman in, and the sooner ’tis got the rids of the better, for ’twill be more by luck than good management if all they kegs is got away unseen.’

‘Oh, of course, Adam’s perfect,’ sneered Jerrem. Then, catching sight of Eve’s face, as he watched Joan go into the kitchen, he added, with a desponding sigh: ‘I only wish I was—but the world’s made for some

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—I s’pose the more they have the more they get.’

Eve did not answer; perhaps she had not heard, as she was just now engaged in shifting her position, so as to escape the dazzling rays of the sun, which came pouring down on



her head. The movement seemed to awaken her to a sense of the day's unusual brightness, and, getting up, she went to the window and looked out.

'Isn't it like summer?' she said, speaking more to herself than to Jerrem. 'I really must say I should like to have gone somewhere for a walk.'

The words, simple in themselves, flung in their tone a whole volume of reproach at Adam, for to Eve's exacting mind there could be no necessity urgent enough to take Adam away without ever seeing her, or leavinor a message for her.

'Well, come out with me,' said Jerrem;

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'there's nothin' I should like better than a bit of a stroll. I'd got it in my head before you spoke.'

Eve hesitated.

'P'r'aps you'm thinkin' Adam 'ud blame 'ee for it.'

'Oh dear no! I'm not! I'm not quite such a slave to Adam's opinion as that. Besides,' she added, feeling she was speaking with undue asperity, 'surely everybody may go for a walk without being blamed by anybody for it—at all events, I mean to go.'

'That's right, said Jerrem. 'Here, I say, Joan, me and Eve's goin' out for a little.'

'Goin' out! Where to?' said Joan, coming forward towards the door, to which he had advanced.

'Oh! round about for a bit—by Chapel Rock, and out that ways.'

'Well, if you goes with her, mind you

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comes back with her. D'ee hear, now? Don't 'ee trust 'un out o' yer sight, Eve, my dear; not further than you can see 'un, nor so far if you can help it.'

'You mind yer own business' said Jerrem.

'If you was to do that you'd stay at home, then,' said Joan, dropping her voice; 'but that's you all over, tryin' to put your finger into somebody else's pie. I doubt whether

'twill overplease Adam either,' she added, coming back from watching them down the street;

'but there! if he and Eve's to sail in one boat, the sooner he learns, 'twon't always be his turn to handle the tiller, the better.'

It was getting on for three o'clock when Adam, having completed all the business he could accomplish on that day, was returning home. He had been to the few

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gentlemen's houses near, had visited most of the large farms round, and had found a good many customers ready to relieve him of a considerable portion of the spirit which, by reason of their living so near at hand, would thus evade much of the danger attendant on a more distant transfer.

Everyone had heard of the recent attack on the *Lottery*, and much sympathy was expressed, and many congratulations tendered on account of their happy escape.

Adam was a general favourite, looked up to and respected as an honest, straightforward fellow; and so little condemnation was felt against the trade carried on, that the very magistrate consented to take a portion of the goods, and saw no breach of his office in the admonition he gave to keep a sharp look-out against these new-comers, who seemed somewhat overinclined to show their teeth.

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Adam spoke freely of the anxiety he felt as to the result of the encounter, but very few seemed to share it. Most of them considered that, having escaped, with the exception of strengthened vigilance, no further notice would be taken, so that his mind was considerably relieved about the matter, and his heart felt lighter, and his pace more brisk, in returning than when in the morning he had set out on his errand.

His last visit had been to Lizzen, and thence, instead of going back by the road, he struck across to the cliff by a narrow path known to him, and which would save him some considerable distance.

The day was perfect—the sky cloudless, the sea tranquil; the young verdure of the crag-crowned cliffs lay bathed in soft sunshine. For a moment Adam paused, struck by

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the air of quiet calm which overspread everything around. Not a breath of wind seemed abroad, not a sail in sight, not a sound to be heard. A few scattered sheep were lazily feeding near; below them a man was tilling a fresh-cleared patch of ground; far away beyond, two figures were standing, side by side.

Involuntarily Adam's eyes rested on these two, and while he gazed upon them, there sprang up into his heart the wish that Eve was here. He wanted her, wanted to remind her of the promise she had given him before they parted, the promise that, on his return, she would no longer delay, but tell him the day on which he might claim her for his wife. A minute more, and, with all speed, he was making a straight cut across the cliff-side. Disregarding the path, he scrambled over the projections of rock, and trampled down the

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furze, with only one thought in his mind—how soon he could reach home.

'Where's Eve, Joan?' he asked, as, having looked through two of the rooms, he came, still in breathless haste, into the outer kitchen, where Joan was now busily engaged in baking her cakes.

'Ain't her outside nowheres?' said Joan, wiping her face with her apron to conceal its expression.

'No, I can't see her.'

'Awh, then, I reckon they'm not come in yet; and by this time she had recovered herself sufficiently to turn round and answer with indifference.

'Who's they?' said Adam, quickly.

'Why, her went out for a bit of a stroll with Jerrem. They — —'

But Adam interrupted her.

'Jerrem!' he exclaimed. 'Why should she go out with Jerrem?'

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‘Awh, he’s right enough now,’ said Joan.

‘He’s so sober as a judge, or I wouldn’t ha’suffered ’en anighst her. Eve thought she should like a bit of a walk, and he offered to go with her, and I was very glad of it too; for Tabithy wanted to sandy the floors, so their room was better for we than their company.’

‘’Tis very strange,’ said Adam, ‘that Eve can’t see how she puts me out by goin’ off anyway like this with Jerrem. I won’t have it,’ he added, with rising anger, ‘and if she’s to be my wife she shan’t do it either; so she’d best choose between us before things go too far.’

‘Awh, don’t ’ee take it like that,’ said Joan, soothingly. ‘’Twasn’t done with no manin’ in it. Her hadn’t any more thought o’ vexin’ ’ee than a babby, nor I neither, so far as that goes, or I should ha’ put a stopper on it, you may be sure.’

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Why, go and meet ’em. They’m only out by Chapel Rock. They left word where they was goin’ a purpose.’

A little mollified by this, Adam said:

‘I don’t tell Eve everything, but Jerrem and I haven’t pulled together for a long time, and the more we see o’ one another the worse it is, and the less I want him to have anything to say to Eve. He’s always carryin’ on some game or ’nother. When we were at Guernsey, he made a reg’lar set out of it ’bout some letter that came there to him. Well, who could that have been from? Nobody we know anything about, or he’d have said so. Besides, who should want to write to him, or what business had he to go blabbin’ about which place we were bound for? I haven’t seen all the soundings o’ that affair clear yet, but I mean to. I ain’t goin’ to be “jammed in a clench like Jackson,” for Jerrem nor nobody else.’

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Joan made no answer. She seemed to be engaged in turning her crock round, and while bending down she said:

'Well, I should go after 'em, if I was you. They'm sure not to be very far off, and I'll get tea ready while you'm gone.'

Adam moved away. Somewhat reluctant to go, he lingered about the rooms for some time, making up his mind what he should do. He could not help being haunted by an idea that the two people he had seen standing were Eve and Jerrem. It was a suspicion which angered him beyond measure, and after once letting it come before him, it rankled so sorely that he determined to satisfy himself, and therefore started off down the street, past the quay, and up by the steps.

'Here, where be goin' to?' called out a voice behind him.

Without stopping, Adam turned his head.

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'Oh, Poll, is that you?' he said.

'Iss.'

'Have ye seen Eve pass this way? I think she'd got Jerrem with her.'

'S pose if I have,' said Poll, with whom Adam was no favourite; 'they doesn't want you. You stay where you be now. I hates to see anybody a-spilein' sport like that.'

With no very pleasant remark on the old woman, Adam turned to go on.

'Awh, you may rin!' she cried, 'but you woan't catch up they. They was bound for Nolan Point, and they's past there long afore now!'

Then the two he had seen were they! An indescribable feeling of jealousy stung Adam, and giving way to his temper in a volley of oaths against old Poll, he turned back, repassed her, and went towards home, while she stood enjoying his discomfiture,

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laughing heartily at it as she called out:

'I hears 'ee. Swear away! I don't mind yer cusses, not I. Better hear they than be deafe!'

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#### CHAPTER IV.

‘Joan, you needn’t expect me till you see me’—Joan turned quickly round, to see Adam at the door, looking angry and determined—‘and you can tell Eve from me, that as it seems all one to her whatever companion she has, I don’t see any need for forcing myself, where I am told I should only be one in the way.’

‘Adam!’—but the door was already slammed, and Joan again left in possession of the kitchen.

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‘Now there ’tis,’ she said, in a tone of vexation, ‘just as I thought: a reg’lar piece o’ work made all out o’ nothin. Drabbit the maid! if her’s got the man her wants, why can’t her study un a bit; but somehow there’s bin a crooked stick lyin’ in her path all day to-day; her’s nipped about somethin’, I’m positive sure o’ that, and they all just come home too, and everythin’, and now to be at daggers drawn with one ’nother—’tis terrible, ’tis.’

Joan’s reflections, interrupted by the necessary attention which her cakes and pasties made upon her, lasted over some considerable time, and they had not yet come to an end when two of the principal objects of them presented themselves before her.

‘Why, wherever have ’ee bin to?’ she said, peevishly. ‘Whatever made ’ee stay away like this for? actin’ so foolish, when

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you knaws, both of ’ee, what a poor temper Adam’s got, if anythin’ goes contrary with ’un.”

Jerrem shrugged his shoulders, while Eve, at once assuming an injured air for such an unmerited attack, said: ‘Really, Joan, I don’t know what you mean; old Poll Potter has just been telling us that Adam came flying and fuming up her way, wanting to know if

she'd seen us, and then, when she said where we'd gone to, he used the most dreadful language to her; I'm sure I don't know for what reason. He chose to go out without me this morning.'

'But that was 'bout business,' said Joan.

'Oh, business!' repeated Eve; 'business is a very convenient word when you don't want to tell a person what your real errand is—not that I want to pry into Adam's secrets, far from it. He's quite welcome to keep what he likes from me, only I'd rather

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he wouldn't tell me half things. I like to know all or none.'

Joan looked mystified, and Jerrem, seeing she did not know what to say, came to the rescue.

'I'm sure I'm very vexed if I've been the cause of anything o' this, Eve,' he said, humbly.

'You needn't be at all vexed—it's nothing at all to do with you: you asked me to go, and I said yes. If I hadn't wanted to go I should have said no. Anyone would think I'd committed a crime, instead of taking a simple walk, with no other fault than not happening to return home at the very same minute that it suited Adam to come back at.'

'But how is it he's a seed you, if you haven't a' seed he,' said Joan, fairly puzzled by this game of cross-purpose; 'he came home all right 'nuf, and then went off

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to see whereabouts he could find 'ee to, and 'bout quarter'n hour after, back he comes in a reg'lar pelt, and says: "You tell Eve," he says, "that I'm not goin' to foace myself where I'm told I shan't be wanted.' Awh, my dear, he'd seed 'ee somewheres,' she continued, in answer to Eve's shrug of bewilderment; 'I could tell that so soon as iver I'd clapped eyes on 'un.'

'And where's he off to now?' said Eve, determined to have an immediate settlement of her wrongs.

'I can't tell; he just flung they words at me and was gone.'

Eve said no more, but with the apparent intention of taking off her hat went upstairs, while Joan, bidding Jerrem go and see if Uncle Zebedee was roused up yet, returned to her previous occupation of preparing the tea. When it was ready she called out:

'Come 'long, Eve!' but no answer was

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returned. 'Tay's ready, my dear.' Still no reply. 'She can't ha' gone out agen?' thought Joan, mounting the stairs to ascertain the cause of the silence, which was soon explained by the sight of Eve flung down on the bed with her head buried in the pillow.

'Now, whatever be doin' this for?' exclaimed Joan, bending down and discovering that Eve was sobbing as if her heart would break. 'Awh, doan't cry now, there's a dear, 't 'ull all come straight agen. Why now, you'll see Adam 'ull be back in no time. 'Twas only through bein' balked when he'd a come back o' purpose to take 'ee out.'

'How was I to know that?' sobbed Eve.

'No, o' course you didn't, and that's what I told 'un. But, lors! 'tis in the nature o' men to be jealous o' one 'nother, and with Adam more partickler o' Jerrem,

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so for the future you must humour 'un a bit, 'cos there's things atwixt they two you don't know nothin' of, and so can't allays tell when the shoe's pinchin' most.'

'I often think whether Adam and me will be happy together,' said Eve, sitting up and drying her eyes. 'I'm willing to give in, but I won't be trampled upon.'

'And he won't want to trample 'pon 'ee neither. Only you study un a bit, and you'll soon learn the measure o' Adam's foot. Why, 'tis only to see 'un lookin' at 'ee to tell how he loves 'ee,' and Joan successfully kept down a rising sigh, as she added, 'Lor's, he wouldn't let a fly pitch 'pon 'ee if he could help it.'

'If he'd seen us before he came in first, he'd have surely told you?' said Eve.

'Awh, he hadn't seen 'ee, then,' said Joan, 'cos, tho' he was a bit vexed, he wasn't in no temper. 'Twas after he went



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out the second time that he must have cast eyes on 'ee some way. Jerrem wasn't up to none of his nonsense, was he?' she asked. 'Cos I knaws what Jerrem is. He don't think no more o' givin' 'ee a kiss or that than he does o' noddin' his head or crookin' his elbaw, and if Adam caught un at that, it 'ud be enough for he.'

Eve shook her head.

'Jerrem never takes none of those liberties with me,' she said. 'He knows I won't allow him to. The whole of the time we did nothing but talk and walk along till we came to a nice place, and then we stayed for a little while looking at the view together, and after that came back.'

'Tis more than I can make out, then,' said Joan, 'cos, though I wondered when you set off whether Adam would 'zactly relish your bein' with Jerrem, I never thought 'twould put un out like this.'

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'It makes me feel so miserable,' said Eve, trying to keep back her tears, 'for oh, Joan!'—and she threw her arms round Joan's neck—'I do love him very dearly.'

'Iss, my dear, I knaws you do,' returned Joan, soothingly, 'and he loves you, too.'

'Then why can't we always feel the same, Joan, and be comfortable and kind and pleasant to one another?'

'Oh lors! that 'ud be a reg'lar milk and watter set-out o' it. No, so long as you don't carry on too far on the wan tack, I likes a bit of a breeze now and then: it freshens 'ee up and puts new life into 'ee; but here, come along down now, and when Adam comes back seem as if nothin' had happened, and p'r'aps, seein' you make so light of it, 'ull make un forget all about it.'

So advised, Eve dried her eyes and smoothed down her ruffled appearance, and

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in a short time joined the party below, which now included Uncle Zebedee, Barnabas Tadd, and Zeke Teague, who had brought word that the *Hart* had only that morning returned to Fowey, entirely ignorant of the skirmish which had taken place between the Looe boats and the *Lottery*, and that though it was reported that the man shot had been shot dead, nothing was known for certain, as it seemed that the men of Looe station were not over anxious to have the thing talked about.

'I should think they wasn't, neither,' chuckled Uncle Zebedee; 'sneakin' cowardly lot; they was game enough whiles they was creepin' up behind; but, lors, so soon as us shawed our faces and they seed they'd got men to dale with there was another tale to tell, and no mistake. I much doubt whether or no wan amongst

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'em had ever smelt powder afore our Jerrem here let 'em have a sniff o' his mixin'; 'tis my belief, and I han' t a got a doubt on the matter neither, that if he hadn't let fly when he did they' d ha' draw' d off and gone away boastin' that they'd got the best o' it.'

Well, and more's the pity you didn't let 'em, then,' said Joan. 'I would, I know. Safe hind's safe find, and you can never tell when fightin' begins where 'tis goin' to end to.'

'It shouldn't ha' ended where it did if I'd had my way,' said Jerrem.

'Awh, well; there, never mind,' said old Zebedee. 'You'll have a chance agen, never fear, and then we must make 'ee capen. How'd that plaze 'ee—eh?'

Jerrem's face bespoke his satisfaction.

'Take care I don't hold 'ee to yer word,' he said, laughing. 'I've got witnesses,

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mind, to prove it—here's Barnabas here, and Zeke Teague, and they won't say me nay, I'll wager, will 'ee, lads?'

'Wa-all, bide a bit—bide a bit!' said Zebedee, winking in appreciation of this joke.

'There'll be two or three o' the oldsters drap in durin' the ebenin', and then us 'll have a bit of a jaw together on it, and weigh sides on the matter.'

As Uncle Zebedee anticipated, the evening brought a goodly number of visitors, who, one after another, came dropping in, until the sitting-room was pretty well filled, and it was as much as Eve and Joan could manage to see that each one was comfortably seated and provided for.

There were the captains of the three vessels, with a portion of the crew of each, several men belonging to the place—all more or less mixed up with the ventures—

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and of course, the crew of the *Lottery*, by no means yet tired of having their story listened to and their adventure discussed. Adam's absence was felt to be a great relief, and each one inwardly voted it as a proof that Adam himself saw that he'd altogether made a missment, and gone nigh to damage the whole concern. Many a jerk of the head, or the thumb, accompanied a whisper that 'he'd a tooked hisself off,' and drew forth the response that 'twas the proper line to pursue; 'and feeling they had no fear of interruption, they resigned themselves to enjoyment and settled down to jollity, in the very midst of which Adam made his appearance; but the time was passed when his presence or his absence could in any way affect them, and instead of the uncomfortable silence which at an earlier stage might have fallen upon the party, his entrance was now only

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the occasion of hard hits and rough jokes, which Adam, seeing the influence under which they were made, tried to bear with all the temper he could command.

'Don't 'ee take no notice of 'em' said Joan, bending over him to set down some fresh glasses. 'They ain't worth yer anger, not one among 'em. I've kept Eve out of it so much as I could; and, after now, there won't be no need for her to come in agen; so you go outside there. Her's a waitin' to have a word with 'ee.'

'Then wait she may,' said Adam. 'I'm goin' to stop where I am. Here, father!' he cried. 'Pass the liquor this way. Come, push the grog about! Last come first served, you know.'

The heartiness with which this was said caused considerable astonishment.

'Iss, iss, lad,' said old Zebedee, his face

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glowing under the effects of hot punch and the efforts of hospitality. 'That's well said. Set-to with a will, and you'll catch us up yet.'

During the laughter called forth by this challenge, Joan took another opportunity of speaking.

'Why, what be 'bout, Adam?' she said, seeing how unlike his speech and action was to his usual self. 'Doan't 'ee go and cut off your naws to spite yer face, now; Eve's close by here—her's as sorry as anything, her is; her wouldn't ha' gone out for twenty pounds if herd know'd it.'

'I wish you'd hold yer tongue,' said Adam; 'I've told you I'm goin' to stop here; be off with you, now.'

But Joan, bent on striving to keep him from an excess to which she saw exasperation was goading him, made one more effort.

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'Awh, Adam!' she said, 'do 'ee come now. 'Eve ——'

'Eve be——'

But before the word had well escaped his lips Joan's hand was clapped over his mouth. Too late, for Eve had come up behind them, and as Adam turned his head to shake Joan off he found himself face to face before her, and the look of outraged love she fixed upon him made his heart quail within him. What could he do, what should he say? Nothing now, for before he could gather up his senses she had passed him by and was gone.

A sickening feeling came over Adam, and he could barely put his lips to the glass which, in order to avert attention, he had caught up and raised to his mouth. At a blow all the resolutions he had forced himself to were upset and scattered, for he had returned with the reckless determination

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of plunging into whatever dissipation chanced to be going on.

He had roamed about, angry and tormented, until the climax of passion was succeeded by an overpowering sense of gloom, to get away from which he had determined to abandon himself, and flinging all restraint aside, sink down to that level over which the better part of his nature had vainly tried to soar.

But now, in the feeling of degradation which Eve's eyes had flashed upon him, the grossness of these excesses came freshly before him, and the knowledge that even in thought he had entertained them made him feel lowered in his own eyes; and if in his eyes, how must he look in hers.

Without a movement, he knew every time that she entered the room; he heard her exchange words with some of those present, applaud a song of Barnabas Todd's,

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answer a question of Uncle Zebedee's, and, sharpest thorn of all, stand behind Jerrem's chair, talking to him, while some of the roughest hits were being made at his own mistaken judgment in holding back those who were ready to have 'sunk the Looe boats and all aboard 'em.'

In the anguish of his heart Adam could have cried aloud. It seemed to him that until now he had never tasted the bitterness of love nor smarted under the sharp' tooth of jealousy. There were lapses, when, sending a covert look across the table, those around him faded away, and only Eve and Jerrem stood before him; and while he gazed, a harsh, discordant laugh would break the spell, and starting, he would find that it was his own voice which had jarred upon his ear. His head seemed on fire, his senses confused. Turning his eyes upon the tumbler of grog which he had poured

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out, he could hardly credit that it still stood all but untasted before him. A noisy song with a rollicking chorus was being sung, and for a moment Adam shut his eyes, trying to recollect himself—all in vain. Everything seemed jumbled and mixed together.

Suddenly, in the midst of the clamour, a noise outside was heard. The door was burst violently open, and as violently shut again by Jonathan, who, throwing himself with all his force against it, cried out:

‘They’ m comin’—they’ m after ’ee—close by—the sodjers—you’ m trapped!’

And exhausted and overcome by exertion and excitement, his tall form swayed to and fro, and then fell back in a deathlike swoon upon the floor.

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## CHAPTER V.

For an instant everyone seemed paralysed and transfixed in the position into which upon Jonathan’s entrance they had started. Then a sudden rush was made towards the door, which several of the strongest blocked up, while Adam called vainly on them to stand aside, and give the chance of more air. Joan flew for water, and Jerrem dashed it over Jonathan.

There was a minute of anxious watching, and then slowly over Jonathan’s pallid

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face the signs of returning animation began to creep.

‘Now, stand back!—stand back from him do!’ said Adam, fearing the effect of so many faces crowding near would only serve to further daze his scared senses. ‘What is it, Jonathan, what is it, lad?’ he asked, kneeling down by him.

Jonathan tried to rise, and Adam motioned for Barnabas Tadd to come and assist in getting him on his feet.

‘Now, sit down there,’ said Adam, ‘and put your lips to this, and then tell us what’s up.’

Jonathan cowered down as he threw a hasty glance round, the meaning of which was answered by a general—

'You knows all of us, Jonathan, don't 'ee?

'Iss,' said Jonathan, breaking into a feeble laugh; 'but somehows I'd a rinned

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till I'd got 'em all as I fancied to me heels, close by.'

'And where are they, then?' said Adam, seizing the opportunity of getting at the most important fact.

'Comin' 'long t' roadway, man by man, straddled on to their horses' backs. They'm to take 'ee all, dead or livin', sarch by night or day. Some o' 'em is come all the ways fra Plymouth, vowin' and swearin' they'll have blid for blid; and that if they can't pitch 'pon he who fired to kill their man, every sawl aboard the *Lottery* shall swing gallows high for un.'

A volley of oaths ran through the room. Joan threw up her arms in despair, Eve groaned aloud.

Suddenly there was a movement, as if some one was breaking from a detaining hand.

'Twas Jerrem, who, pushing forward, cried out:

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'Then I'll give myself up to wance; nobody shan't suffer 'cos o' me. I did it, and I wasn't afeared to do it neither, and no more I ain't afeared to answer for it now.'

The buzz which negatived this offer, bespoke the appreciation of Jerrem's magnanimity.

Adam alone had taken no part in it; turning, he said sternly:

'Do we risk our lives together, then, to skulk off when danger offers, and leave one to suffer for all? Let's have no more of such idle talk; while things promised to run smooth, you was welcome to the boast of havin' fired first shot, but now every man aboard fired it; and let he who says he didn't stand out and say it now.'

'Fair spoke, and good sense,' said the men.

'Then off with you, each to the place he thinks safest. Jerrem and you, father,

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must stay here. I shall go to the mill, and Jonathan, for the night, you'd best come along with me.'

With little visible excitement, and but few words, the men began to depart—all of them more or less stupefied by the influence of drink, which, combined with this unexpected dash to their hopes and overthrow of their boastings, seemed to rob them of all their energy. They were ready to do whatever they were asked, go wherever they were told, listen to all that was said; but anything beyond this was then impossible. They had no more power of deciding, proposing, arranging for themselves, than if they had been a flock of sheep warned that a ravenous wolf was near.

The one necessary action which seemed to have laid hold upon them was that they must all solemnly shake hands,

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and this in many cases they did over and over again, repeating each time, with a warning nod of the head: 'Well, mate, 'tis a bad job o' it, this,' until some of the more collected felt it necessary to interfere, and urge their immediate departure; then one by one they stole away, leaving the house in possession of its usual occupants.

Adam had already been upstairs to get Uncle Zebedee—now utterly incapable of any thought for himself—safely placed in a secret closet, which was hollowed in the wall behind the bed. Turning to Jerrem as he came down, he said:

'You can manage to stow yourself away; only mind, do it at once, so that the house is got quiet before they've time to get here.'

'All right,' said Jerrem, doggedly, while Joan slid back the seat of the settle, turned

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down a flap in the wall, and discovered the hole in which Jerrem was to lie concealed.

'There!— there ain't another hidin'- place like that in all Polperro,' she said. 'They may send a whole reg'ment o' sodgers afore a man among 'em 'ull pitch on 'ee there, Jerrem.'



‘And that’s the reason why I don’t want to have it,’ said Jerrem. ‘I don’t see why I’m to have the pick and choice, and why Adam’s to go off to where they’ve only got to search and find.’

‘Well, but ’tis as he says,’ urged Joan. ‘They may ha’ got you in their eye already. Come, ’tis all settled now,’ she continued persuasively; so get ’longs in with ’ee, like a dear.’

Jerrem gave a look round—Eve was busy clearing the table; Adam was putting some tobacco into his pouch. He

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hesitated, then he made a step forward, then he drew back again, until at last, with visible effort, he said:

‘Come, give us yer hand, Adam?’

With no affectation of cordiality, Adam held out his hand.

‘Whatever comes, you’ve spoke up fair for me, and acted better than most would ha’ done, seein’ that I’ve let my tongue run a bit too fast ’bout you o’ late.’

‘Oh, don’t think I’ve done any more for you than I should ha’ done for either one o’ the others,’ said Adam, not willing to accept a feather’s weight of Jerrem’s gratitude.

‘However,’ he added, trying to force himself into a greater show of graciousness, ‘here’s wishin’ all may go well with you, as with all of us.’

Not over-pleased with this cold reception

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of his advances, Jerrem turned hastily round to Joan.

‘Here, let’s have a kiss, Joan?’ he said.

‘Iss twenty, my dear, so long as you’ll only be quick ’bout it.’

‘Eve!’

‘There, nonsense now!’ exclaimed Joan, warned by an expression in Adam’s face;

‘there’s no call for no leave-takin’ with Eve, her ’ll be here so well as you.’

The words, well intentioned as they were, served as fuel to Adam's jealous fire, and for a moment he felt that it was impossible to go away and leave Jerrem behind; but the next instant the very knowledge of that passing weakness was only urging him to greater self-command, although the effort it cost him gave a hardness to his voice and a coldness to his manner. One tender word, and his resolve

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would be gone—one soft emotion, and to go would be impossible.

Eve, on her part, with all her love reawakened, her fears excited, and her imagination sharpened, was wrought up to a pitch of emotion which each moment grew more and more beyond her control. In her efforts to keep calm, she busied herself in clearing the table and moving to and fro the chairs, all the time keenly alive to the fact that Joan was hovering about Adam, suggesting comforts, supplying resources, and pouring out a torrent of wordy hopes and fears. Surely Adam would ask—Joan would think to give them one moment to themselves? If not, she would demand it; but before she could speak, boom on her heart came Adam's 'Good-bye, Joan.'—'Good-bye!' What can she do now? How bear this terrible parting? In her efforts

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to control the desire to give vent to her agony, her powers of endurance utterly gave way. A rushing sound, as of many waters, came gurgling in her ears, dulling the voice of some one who spoke from far off.

'What are they saying?' In vain she tried to catch the words—to speak—to move; then gathering up all her strength, with a piercing cry she tried to break the spell. The room reeled, the ground beneath her gave way, a hundred voices shrieked good-bye, and with their clamour ringing in her ears, Eve's spirit went down into silence and darkness. Another minute and she was again alive to all her misery; Joan was kneeling beside her, the tears streaming from her eyes.

'What is it? Where's Adam?' exclaimed Eve, starting up.

'Gone!' said Joan; 'he said 'twas

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better to, 'fore you comed to yourself agen.'

'Gone! and never said a word?' she cried. 'Gone! Oh, Joan, how could he—how could he?'

'What would 'ee have un do, then?' said Joan, sharply; 'bide dallyin' here to be took by the hounds o' sodgers that's marchin' 'pon us all? that's fine love, I will say.' But suddenly a noise outside made them both start, and stand listening with beating hearts until all again was still and quiet; then Joan's quick-roused anger failed her, and repenting her sharp speech, she threw her arms round Eve's neck, crying: 'Awh, Eve, don't 'ee lets you and me set 'bout quarrellin', my dear, for if sorrow ain't a-drawin' nigh, my name's not Joan Hocken. I never before felt the same way as I do to-night. My spirits is gived way; my heart seems to have

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failed flat down and died within me, and, be doing what I may, there keeps soundin' in my ears a nickety-knock like the tappin' on a coffin-lid.'

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## CHAPTER VI.

Since the night on which Jonathan's arrival had plunged the party assembled at Zebedee Pascal's into such dismay, a week had passed by—seven days and nights of terror and confusion.

The determined manner in which the Government authorities traced out each clue and tracked every scent struck terror into the stoutest hearts, and men who had never before shrunk from danger in any open form now feared to show their faces,

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dared not sleep in their own houses, nor, except by stealth, visit their own families. At dead of night, as well as in the blaze of day, stealthy descents would be made upon the place—the houses surrounded, and strict search made. One hour the streets would be deserted, the next every corner bristled with rude soldiery, flinging insults and imprecations on the feeble old men and defenceless women who, panicstricken, stood about vainly endeavouring to seem at their ease, and keep up a show of indifference.

One of the first acts had been to seize the *Lottery*, and orders had been issued to arrest all or any of her crew, wherever they might be found; but as yet no trace of them had been discovered; Jerrem and Uncle Zebedee still lay concealed within the house, and Adam at the mill, crouched beneath corn-bins, lay covered

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by sacks and grain, while the tramp of the soldiers sounded in his ears, or the ring of their voices set his stout heart quaking with fear of discovery. To men whose lives had been spent out of doors, with the free air of heaven and the fresh salt breeze of the sea constantly sweeping over them, toil and hardship were pastimes, compared to this inactivity, and it was little to be wondered at, that for one and all the single solace left seemed drink—drink deadened their restlessness, benumbed their energies, made them forget their dangers, sleep through their durance. So that even Adam could not always hold out against a solace which helped to shorten the frightful monotony of those weary days, dragged out for the most time in solitude and darkness. With no occupation, no resources, no companion, ever dwelling on self and viewing each action, past and present, by

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the light of an exaggerated (often a distorted) vision, Adam grew irritable, morose, suspicious. Why hadn't Joan come? Surely there couldn't be anything to keep Eve away? and if so, might they not send a letter, a message, or some token to show him that he was still in their thoughts? In vain did Mrs. Tucker urge the necessity of a caution hitherto unknown; in vain did she repeat the stories brought of footsteps dogged, and

houses watched, so that their inmates dare not run the smallest risk, for fear of its leading to detection. Adam turned a deaf ear to all she said, sinking at last down to the conclusion that he could endure such suspense no longer, and come what might, must the next day steal back home, and satisfy himself how things were going on. The only concession to her better judgment which Mrs. Tucker could

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gain, was his promise to wait until she had been in to Polperro to reconnoitre; for though, from having seen a party of soldiers pass that morning, they knew some of the troop had left, it was impossible to say how many remained behind, nor whether they had received fresh strength from the opposite direction.

'I shan't give no more o' they than I sees the wisdom of,' reflected Mrs. Tucker, as primed with questions to ask Joan, and messages to give to Eve, she securely fastened the doors preparatory to her departure. 'If I was to tell up such talk to Eve, her'd be piping off here next minit, or else sendin' back a pack o' silly speeches that ud' make Adam mazed to go to she. 'Tis wonderful how took up he is with a maid he knows so little of. But there,'tis the same with all the men, I b'lieve—tickle their eye, and good-bye to

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their judgement.' And giving the outer gate a shake to assure herself that it could not be opened without a preparatory warning to those within, Mrs. Tucker turned away and out into the road.

A natural tendency to be engrossed by personal interests, together with a life of narrowed circumstances, had somewhat blunted the acuteness of Mrs. Tuckers impressionable sensibihities; yet she could not but be struck at the change these last two weeks had wrought in the aspect of the place. The houses, wont to stand open so that friendly greetings might be exchanged, were now closed and shut; the blinds of most of the windows were drawn down; the streets, usually thronged with idlers, were all but

deserted; the few shops empty of wares and of customers. Calling to her recollection the frequent prophetic warnings she had indulged in about these

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evil days to come, Mrs. Tucker's heart smote her.

'Surely Providence had never taken her at her word, and really brought a judgment on the place? If so, seeing her own kith and kin would be amongst the most to suffer, it had read a very wrong meaning in her words; for it stood to reason, when folks talked serious-like, they didn't always stop to measure what they said, and if a text or two o' Scripture sounded seemly, 'twas fitted in to help their speech out with, not to be pulled abroad to seek the downright meanin' o' each word.'

Subdued and oppressed by these and like reflections, Mrs. Tucker reached Uncle Zebedee's house, inside which the change wrought was in keeping with the external sadness. Both girls looked harassed and careworn: Joan, now that there was no further occasion for that display of spirit

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and bravado which before the soldiers she had successfully contrived to maintain, utterly broken down and apathetically dejected; Eve, unable to enter into all the difficulties, or sympathise in the universal danger, ill at ease with herself, and irritable with all around her. In her anxiety to hear about Adam—what message he had sent, and whether she could not go to see him—she had barely patience to listen to Mrs. Tucker's roundabout details and lugubrious lamentations, and choosing a very inopportune moment, she broke out with:

'What message has Adam sent, Mrs. Tucker? He's sent a message to me, I'm sure. I know he must have!'

'Awh, well, if you knaws, you don't want to be told, then,' snorted Mrs. Tucker, ill pleased at having her demands upon sympathy put to such sudden flight.

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‘Though don’t you think, Eve, that Adam hasn’t got somethin’ else to think of than sendin’ love-messages and nonsense o’ that sort? He’s a good deal too much took up ’bout the trouble we’m all in for that. He hoped you was all well, and keepin’ yer spirits up, Joan.’

‘Poor sawl!’ sighed Joan; ‘I ’spects he finds that’s more than he can do.’

‘Ah, you may well say that,’ replied Mrs. Tucker, casting a troubled look towards her daughter’s altered face. ‘Adam’s doin’ purtty much the same as you be, Joan—frettin’ his insides out.’

‘He’s fretting, then?’ gasped Eve, managing to get the words past the great lump which seemed to choke her further utterance.

‘Frettin’?’ repeated Mrs. Tucker, with severity; ‘but there, why should I?’ she

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added, as if blaming her sense of injury, ‘I keeps forgettin’ that, compared with Joan, Eve, you’m nothin’ but a stranger, as you may say; and, though I dare say I shan’t get your thanks for saying it, still Adam could tell ’ee so well as me, that fresh faces is all very well in fair weather, but in times of trouble they counts for very little aside o’ they who’s bin brought up from the same cradle, you may say.’

Eve’s swelling heart could bear no more. This sense of being set aside, and looked on as a stranger, was a gall which of late she had been frequently called upon to endure; but to have it hinted at that Adam could share in this feeling towards her— oh, it was too much; and rising hastily, she turned to run upstairs.

‘Now there’s no call to fly off in no tantrums, Eve,’ said Mrs. Tucker; ‘so

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just sit down now and listen to what else I’ve got to say.’

But Eve’s outraged love could hide itself no longer; to answer Joan’s mother with anything like temper was impossible, and knowing this, her only refuge was in flight.

‘I don’t want to hear any more you may have to say, Mrs. Tucker;’ and though Eve managed to keep under the sharpness of her voice, she could not control the indignant

expression of her face, which Mrs. Tucker fully appreciating, she speeded her departure by the inspiriting prediction, that if Eve didn't sup sorrow by the spoonful before her hair was grey, her name wasn't Ann Tucker.

'Awh, don't 'ee say that,' said Joan.

'You'm over-crabbit with her, mother; and her only wantin to hear some word that Adam had sent to her own self.'

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'But, mercy 'pon us, her must give me time to fetch my breath!' exclaimed Mrs. Tucker, indignantly; 'and I fo'ced to fly off as I did, for fear that Adam should forestall me, and go doin' somethin' foolish!'

'He ain't wantin' to come home?'

said Joan, hurriedly. 'Iss, but he is though. And when us see they sodgers go past, I thought no other than he'd a set off then and there. As I said to un, 'tis true you knows o' they that's gone, but how can 'ee tell how many's left behind?'

Joan shook her head.

'They'm all off,' she said; 'every man of 'em's gone: but for all that, Adam mustn't come anighst us, or show his face in the place. 'Tis held everywheres that this move is nothin' but a decoy to get the men out o' hidin'; and that done,

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back they'll all come and drop down on 'em.'

'Well, then, I'd best go back to wanst!' cried Mrs. Tucker, starting up, 'and try and put a stop to his comin', tho' whether he'll pay any heed to what I say, is more than I'll answer for.'

'Tell un,' said Joan, 'that for all our sakes he mustn't come; and say that I've had word that Jonathan's lurkin' nigh about here some place, so I reckon there's somethin' up, and what it is he shall know so soon as I can send word to un; say *that* ought to tell un 't isn't safe to stir, 'cos he knows that Jonathan would sooner have gone to he than to either wan here.'



‘Well, I’ll tell un all you tells me to,’ said Mrs. Tucker, with a somewhat hopeless expression, ‘but you know what Adam is, Joan, when he fixes his mind on anythin’; and I’ve had the works o’ the world

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to keep un from comin’ already—he takes such fancies about ’ee all as you never did. I declare if I didn’t know that p’r’aps he’s a had more liquor than he’s used to take o’ times, I should ha’ fancied un light-headedlike.’

‘And so he’ll be if you gives much sperrit to un, mother,’ said Joan, anxiously; ‘’tis sure to stir his temper up. But there,’ she added despondingly, ‘what can anybody do? ’tis all they ha’ got to fly to. There’s Jerrem at it fro’ mornin’ to night and as for uncle, dear saul, he’s as happy as a clam at high watter.’

‘Iss; I reckon,’ said Mrs. Tucker, ‘it don’t never matter much what goes wrong, so long as uncle gets his fill o’ drink. I’ve said scores o’ times uncle’s joy ’ud never run dry so long as liquor lasted.’

‘Ah, well!’ said Joan, ‘I don’t know what us should ha’ done if there’d ha’ bin

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no drink to give ’em; they’d ha’ bin more than Eve and me could manage, I can tell ’ee. Nobody but our own selves, mother, will ever know what us two maidens have had to go through.’

‘You’ve often had my thoughts with ’ee, Joan,’ said Mrs. Tucker, her eyes dimmed by a rush of motherly sympathy for all the girls must have suffered; ‘and you can tell Eve (for her’ll take it better from you than from me) that Adam’s allays a-thinkin’ of her, and begged and prayed that she wudn’t forget un.’

‘No fear o’ that,’ said Joan, anxious that her mother should depart; ‘and mind now you say, no matter what time ’tis, directly I’s seen Jonathan and knows ’tis safe for we, somebody shall bring un word to come back, for Eve and me’s longin’ to have a sight of un.’

Charged with these messages Mrs.

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Tucker hastened back to the mill, where all had gone well since her departure, and where she found Adam more tractable and reasonable than she had had reason to anticipate. He listened to all Joan's messages, agreed with her suspicions, and seemed contented to abide by her decision. The plain unvarnished statement which Mrs. Tucker gave of the misery and gloom spread over the place affected him visibly, and her account of the two girls, and the alteration she had seen in them, did not tend to dispel his emotion.

'As for Joan,' she said, letting a tear escape and trickle down her cheek, 'tis heart-breakin' to look at her. Her's terrible wrapped up in you, Adam, is Joan; more than, as her mother, I cares for her to awn to, seein' how you'm situated with Eve.'

'Oh, Eve never made no difference 'twixt us two,' said Adam. Then, after a

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pause, he asked, 'Didn't Eve give you no word to give to me?'

'Well, no,' said Mrs. Tucker; then, with the determination to deal fairly, she added quickly, 'but her was full o' questions about 'ee, and that 'fore I'd time to draw breath inside the place.' Adam was silent, and Mrs. Tucker, considering the necessity for further explanation removed by the compromise she had made, continued, 'You see, what with Jerrem and uncle, and the drink that goes on, they two poor maidens is kept pretty much on the go; and Eve, never bein' used to no such ways, seems terrible harried by it all.'

'Harried!' repeated Adam, with ill suppressed bitterness, 'and well she may be; still I should ha' thought she might have managed to send, if 'twas no more than a word back to me.'

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## CHAPTER VII.

Under the plea that, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, Jonathan might stir possibly put in an appearance, Adam lingered in his aunt's cheerful-looking kitchen until after the clock had struck eleven; then he very reluctantly got up, and, bidding Mrs. Tucker and Sammy good-night, betook himself to the millhouse, in which, with regard to his greater safety, a bed had been made up for him.

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Adam felt that, court it as he might, sleep was very far from his eyes, and that, compared to his own society, and the torment of thought which harassed and racked him each time he found himself alone, even Sammy Tucker's company was a boon to be grateful for. There were times, during these hours of dreary loneliness, when Adam's whole nature seemed submerged by the billows of love; cruel waves, which would toss him hither and thither, making sport of his hapless condition, to strand him at length on the quicksands of fear, where a thousand terrible alarms would seize him, and fill him with dread as to how these disasters might end. What would become of him? how would it fare with Eve and himself? where could they go? what could they do? Questions ever swallowed up by the constantly recurring all-important bewilderment as to what could

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possibly have brought about this dire disaster.

On this night Adam's thoughts were more than usually engrossed by Eve; her form seemed constantly before him, distracting him with images as tempting and unsatisfying as is the desert spring, with which desire mocks the thirst of the fainting traveller: at length that relaxation of strength, which in sterner natures takes the place of tears, subdued Adam, a softened feeling crept over him, and shifting his position, so that he might rest his arms against the corn-bin near, a deepdrawn sigh escaped him.

'Hist!' Adam started at the sound, and without moving, turned his head and looked rapidly about him. Nothing was to be seen; with the exception of the small radius round the lantern, all was darkness and gloom.

'Hist!' was repeated, and this

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time there was no more doubt but that the sound came from some one close by. A clammy sweat stood on Adam's forehead, his tongue felt dry, and so powerless that it needed an effort to force it to move.

'Who's there?' he said.

''Tis me—Jonathan.'

Adam caught up the lantern, and turning it in the direction whence the voice came, found to his relief that the rays fell upon Jonathan's face.

'Odds rot it, lad!' he exclaimed, 'but you've gived me a turn! How the deuce did you get in here, and why didn't ye come inside to the house over there?' 'I've a bin scrooged down 'tween these 'ere sacks for ever so long,' said Jonathan, trying to stretch out his cramped limbs; 'I reckon I've had a bit o' a nap too, for the time ha'n't a took long in goin', and when I fust come 'twasn't altogether dark.'

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''Tis close on the stroke o' twelve now,' said Adam. 'But come, what news, eh? Have ye got hold o' anything yet? Are they devils off for good? Is that what you've come to tell me?

'Iss; they's off this time, I fancy,' said Jonathan; 'but 'twasn't that broffed me, though I should ha comed to tell 'ee o' that too.'

'No! what is it then?' demanded Adam impatiently, turning the light so that he could get a better command of Jonathan's face.

''Twas 'cos o' this,' said Jonathan, his voice dropping to a whisper, so that, though the words were trembling on his lips, his agitation and excitement almost prevented their utterance; 'I've found it out—all of it—who blowed the gaff 'pon us.'

Adam started forward; his face all but touched Jonathan's, and an expression

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of terrible eagerness came into his eyes.

'Twas she!' hissed Jonathan. 'She—her from London—Eve!' but before the name was well uttered, Adam had thrown himself upon him and was grasping at his throat as if to throttle him; while a volley of imprecations poured from his mouth, denouncing the base lie which Jonathan had dared to utter. A moment more, and this fit of impotent rage over, he flung him violently off and stood for a moment trying to bring back his senses; but the succession of circumstances had been too much for him—his head swam round, his knees shook under him, and he had to grasp hold of a beam near to steady himself.

'What for do 'ee sarve me like that then?' muttered Jonathan. 'I ain't a-tellin' 'ee no more than I've a-heerd and what's

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the truth. Her name's all over the place,' he went on, forgetful of the recent outburst, and warming with his narration. 'Her's a reg'lar bad wan—her's a-carr'ed on with a sodger chap so well as with Jerrem—hers a ——'

'By the living Lord, if you speak another word I'll be your death!' exclaimed Adam.

'Wa-al, and so you may,' exclaimed Jonathan doggedly, 'if so be you'll lave me bide 'til I'se seed the end o' she.

Why, what do 'ee mane then?' he cried, a sudden suspicion throwing a light on Adam's storm of indignation, 'Her bain't nawthin' to you, her's Jerrem's maid—her bain't your maid? Why,' he added, finding that Adam didn't speak, "'twas through the letter I carr'ed from he that her'd got it to blab about; I wishes my hand had bin struck off"—and he dashed

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it violently against the wooden bin—'afore I'd touched his letter or his money.'

‘What letter?’ gasped Adam.

‘Wa-all, I knaws you said I warn’t to take neither wan; but Jerrem he coaxes and persuades, and says you ain’t to know nawthin’ about it, and ’tain’t nawthin in it, only ’cos he’d a got a letter fra’ she to Guernsey, and this was t’answer; and then I knawed, ’cos I seed em, that they was sweetheartin’ and that, and — — ’

‘Did you give her that letter?’ said Adam, and the sound of his voice was so strange that Jonathan shrank back and cowered close to the wall.

‘Iss, I did,’ he faltered; ‘leastwise I gived un to Joan, but t’other wan had the radin’ in it.’

There was a pause, during which Adam stood stunned, feeling that everything was

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crumbling and giving way beneath him, that he had no longer anything to live for, anything to hope, anything to fear. As one after another, each former bare suggestion of artifice now passed before him clothed in the raiment of certain deceit, he made a desperate clutch at the most improbable, in the wild hope that one falsehood at least might afford him some ray of light, however feeble, to dispel the horrors of this terrible darkness.

‘And after she’d got the letter,’ he said, what—what about the rest?’

‘Why ’twas this way,’ cried Jonathan, his eyes rekindling in his eagerness to tell the story, ‘somebody dropped a bit of paper into the rendevoos winder, with writin’ ’pon it to say when and where they’d find the *Lottery* to. Who ’twas did it, none knaws for certain; but the talk’s got abroad ’twas a sergeant there, ’cos he’d a bin

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braggin’ aforehand that he’d got a watchsale, and that o’ her’n.’

‘Her’n!’ echoed Adam.

‘Iss, o’ Eve’s. And he’s allays a-showin’ of it off, he is; and when they axes un questions he doan’t answer, but he dangles the sale afront of ’em and says, “What d’ee

think," he says; and now he makes his brag that he shall hab the maid yet, while her man's a-dancin' gallus-high a top o' Tyburn tree.'

The blood rushed up into Adam's face, so that each vein stood a separate cord of swollen bursting rage.

'They wasn't a-manin' you, ye knaw,' said Jonathan; 'twar Jerrem—her's played un false, I reckon. Awh!' and he gave a fiendish chuckle, 'but us'll pay her out for't, woan't us, eh? Awnly you give to me the ticklin' o' her ozel-pipe,' and he made a movement of his bony fingers that conveyed

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such a hideous embodiment of his meaning, that Adam, overcome by horror, threw up his arms with a terrible cry to heaven, and falling prone he let the bitterness of death pass over the love that had so late lain warm at his heart; while Jonathan crouched down, trembling and awe stricken by the sight of emotion which, though he could not comprehend nor account for, stirred in him the sympathetic uneasiness of a dumb animal. Afraid to move or speak, he remained watching Adam's bent figure, until his shallow brain, incapable of any sustained concentration of thought, wandered off to other interests, from which he was recalled by a noise, and looking up he saw that Adam had raised himself and was wiping his face with his handkerchief. Did he feel so hot, then? No, it must be that he felt cold, for he shivered and his teeth seemed to chatter

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as he told Jonathan to stoop down by the side there, and hand him up a jar and a glass that he would find; and this got, Adam poured out some of its contents, and after tossing it off, told Jonathan to take the jar and help himself; for, as nothing could be done until daylight, they might as well lie down and try and get some sleep. Jonathan's relish for spirit once excited, he made himself tolerably free of the permission, and before long had helped himself to such purpose that, stretched in a heavy sleep, unless some one roused him he was not likely to awake for some hours to come.

Then Adam got up, and with cautious movements stole down the ladder, undid the small hatch-door which opened out on the mill-stream, fastened it after him, and leaping across, stood for a few moments asking himself what he had come out to

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do. He didn't know, for as yet, in the tumult of jealousy and revenge, there was no outlet, no gap by which he might drain off any portion of that passionate fire which was rapidly destroying and consuming all his softer feelings. The story which Jonathan had brought of the betrayal to the sergeant, the fellow's boastings, and his possession of the seal, Adam treated as an idle tale, its possibility vanquished by his conviction that Eve could have had no share in it. It was the letter from Jerrem which was the damnatory proof in Adam's eyes, the proof by which he judged and condemned her; for had not he himself seen and wondered at Jerrem's anxiety to go to Guernsey, his elation at finding a letter waiting him, his display of wishing to be seen secretly reading it, and now his ultimate

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betrayal of them by sending an answer to it?

As for Jerrem, oh! he would deal with him as with a dog, and quickly send him to that fate he so richly deserved. It was not against Jerrem that the depths of his bitterness welled over: as the strength of his love, so ran his hate; and this all turned to one direction, and that direction pointed towards Eve.

He must see her, stand face to face with her, smite her with reproaches, heap upon her curses, show her how he could trample on her love, and fling her back her perjured vows—and then? This done, what was there left? From Jerrem he could free himself. A word, a blow, and all would be over; but how with her? True, he could kill the visible Eve with his own hands; but the Eve who lived in his love, would she not live there still? Aye!

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and though he flung that body, which could court the gaze of other eyes than his, full fathoms deep, the fair image which dwelt before him would still remain present to his vision. So that, do what he would, Eve would live, must live. Live! Crushing down on that thought came the terrible consequences which might come of Jonathan's tale being told— a tale so coloured with all their bitterest prejudices that it was certain to be greedily listened to; and in the storm of angry passion it would rouse, everything else would be swallowed up by resentment against Eve's baseness, and the fire once kindled, what would come of it?

The picture which Adam's heated imagination conjured up turned him hot and cold; an agony of fear crept over him; his heart sickened and grew faint within him, and the hands, which but a few

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minutes before had longed to be steeped in her blood, now trembled and shook with nervous dread lest a finger of harm should be laid upon her.

These and a hundred visions more or less wild coursed through Adam's brain, as his feet took their swift way towards Polperro— not keeping along the open road, but taking a path which—only known to the inhabitants—would bring him down almost in front of his own house.

The night was dark, the sky lowering and cloudy. Not a sound was to be heard, not a soul had he seen, and already Adam was discussing with himself how best, without making an alarm, he should awaken Joan and obtain admittance. Usually bars and bolts were unknown, doors were left unfastened, windows often open; but now all would be securely shut, and he would have to rely on the possibility of his signal

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being heard by some one who might chance to be on the watch.

Suddenly a noise fell upon his ear. Surely he heard the sound of footsteps and the hum of voices! It could never be that the surprise they deemed a possibility had turned out a certainty! Adam crouched down, and under shadow of the wall glided silently along

until he came opposite the corner where the house stood. It was as he feared. There was no further doubt. The shutters were flung back, the door was half open, and round it, easing their tired limbs as best they might, stood crowded together a dozen men, the portion of a party who had evidently spread themselves about the place.

Fortunately for Adam, the steps which led up to the wooden orrel, or balcony—at that time a common adornment to the Polperro houses—afforded him a tolerably safe

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retreat; and screened here, he remained, a silent watcher, hearing only a confused murmur and seeing nothing save an occasional movement, as one and the other changed posts and passed in and out of the opposite door. At length a general parley seemed to take place, the men fell into rank, and at a slow pace moved off down the street in the direction of the quay. Adam looked cautiously out. The door was now closed. Dare he open it? Might he not find that a sentinel had been left behind? How about the other door? The chances against it were as bad. The only possible way of ingress was by a shutter in the wall, which overlooked the brook and communicated with the hiding-place in which his father lay secreted. This shutter had been little used since the days of pressgangs. It was painted in so exact an imitation of the slated house wall as to defy

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detection, and to mark the spot to the initiated eye, a root of house-leek projected out below, and served to further screen the opening from view. The contrivance of this shutter-entrance was well known to Adam, and the mode of reaching it familiar to him; therefore, if he could but elude observation he was certain of success.

The plan once decided on, he began putting it into execution; and, although it seemed half a lifetime to him, but very few minutes had elapsed before he had crossed the road, ran waist-high into the brook, scaled the wall, and scrambled down almost on top of old Zebedee, who, stupefied by continual drink, sleep, and this constant confinement, took the surprise in a wonderfully calm manner.

‘Hist, father! ’tis only me—Adam!’

‘A’ right! a’ right!’ stammered Zebedee, too dazed to take in the whole matter at

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once. ‘What is it lad, eh? They darned galoots ha’n’t a-tracked ’ee, have ’em? By the hooky! but they’ m givin’ ’t us hot and strong this time, Adam; they was trampin’ ’bout inside here a minit agone, tryin’ to keep our sperrits up by a-rattlin’ the bilboes in our ears. Why, however did ’ee dodge ’em—eh? What’s the manin’ o’ it all?’

‘I thought they was gone,’ said Adam, ‘so I came down to see how you were all getting on here.’

‘Iss, iss, sure; wa-al, all right, I s’pose, but I ha’n’t abin let outside much; Joan won’t have it, ye know. Poor Joan!’ he sighed, ‘her’s terrible moody-hearted ’bout ’t all—and so’s Eve too. I never see’d maids take on as they’ m doin’; but there, I reckon ’twill soon be put a end to now.’

‘How so?’ said Adam.

‘Wa-al, you mustn’t know, down below, more than you’ m tawld,’ said the old man,

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with a significant wink and a jerk of his head, ‘but Jerrem he let me into it this ebenin’ when he rinned up to see me for a bit. Seems one o’ they sodger chaps is car’in’ on with Eve, and Jerrem’s settin’ her on to rig un up so that her’ll get un not to see what ’tain’t maned for un to look at.’

‘Well?’ said Adam.

‘Iss,’ said Zebedee, ‘but will it be well? that’s what I keeps axin’ of un. He’s cock sure, sartain, that they can manage it all. He’s sick, he says, o’ all this skulkin’, and he’s blamed if he’ll go on standin’ it, neither.’

‘Oh!’ hissed Adam, ‘he’s sick of it, is he?’ and, in the effort he made to subdue his voice, the veins in his face rose up to be purple cords. ‘He’d nothing to do with bringing it on us all? it’s no fault of his that the place is turned into a hell,

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and we hunted down like a pack o' dogs?'

'Awh, well, I daun't knaw nuffin 'bout that,' said old Zebedee, huffily; 'how so be if 'tis so, when he's got clane off 'twill be all right agen.'

'All right!' thundered Adam, 'how all right? Right that he should get off, and we be left here; that he shouldn't swing, but we must stay to suffer?'

'Awh, come, come, come!' said the old man, with the testy impatience of one ready to argue but incapable of reasoning, "'tain't no talk o'swingin', now; that was a bit o' brag on the boy's part; he's so eager to save his neck as you or me either. Awnly Jonathan's bin here and tawld up sommat that makes un want to be off to wance, for he says, what us all knaws, without he's minded to it, you can't slip a knot round Jonathan's clapper; and 'tain't

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that Jerrem's afeared o' his tongue, awnly for the keepin' up o' pace and quietness he fancies 'twould be better for un to make hisself scarce for a bit.'

Adam's whole body quivered as a spasm of rage ran through him; and Zebedee, noting the trembling movement of his hands, conveyed his impression of the cause by bestowing a glance, accompanied with a pantomimic bend of his elbow in the direction of a certain stone bottle which stood in the corner.

'Did Jonathan tell you what word 'twas he'd brought?' Adam managed to say.

'Noa. I never cast eyes on un. He warn't here 'bove a foo minits 'fore he slipped away, none of 'em knaws where or how. He was warned not to go anighst you,' he added after a moment's pause; 'so I reckon you knaws no more of un than us does.'

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'And Eve and Joan—were they let into the secret?' asked Adam, and the sound of his harsh voice grated even on Zebedee's dulled ears.

'Iss, I reckon, ' he said, half turning; 'cos Eve's got to do the trick—her's to bamfoozle the sodger. Odds rot it, lad!' he cried, startled at the expression which leaped into Adam's haggard face, 'what's -come to 'ee that you must turn round 'pon us like

that? Is it the maid you's got a spite agen? Lors! but 'tis a poor stomach you's got to'rds her, if you'm angered by such a bit o' philanderin' as I've towld 'ee of. What d'ee mane then?' he added, his temper rising at such unwarrantable inconsistency. 'I've knawed as honest women as ever her is that's a done that, and more too, for to get their men safe off and out o' way—iss, and wasn't thought none the wus of, neither. You'm

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growed mighty fancikul all to wance 'bout what us is to do, and what us dussn't think o'. I'm sick o' such talk. 'Taint nawthin' else fra' mornin' to night, but Adam this and Adam that. I'm darned if 'tis to be wondered at if the maid plays 'ee false; by gosh! I'd do the trick, if I was she, 'fore I'd put up with such fantads from you, or either man like 'ee—so there!

Roger did not answer, and old Zebedee, interpreting the silence into an admission of the force of his arguments, forbore to press the advantage, and generously started a fresh topic.

'They's a towld 'ee, I reckon, 'bout the bill they's a posted up, right afore the winder, by the Three Pilchards,' he said. 'Iss,' he added, not waiting for an answer; 'the king's pardon, and wan hunderd pound, to he who'll discover to 'em the man who 'twas fired the fatal shot. 'Wan

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hunderd pound!' he sneered. 'That's a fat lot, surely, and as for t' king's pardon, why 'twudn't lave un braithin' time to spend it in, not if he war left here 'twudn't. No fear! us ain't so bad off yet that either wan in Polperro 'ud stink their fingers wi'blid money. Lord save un! sich a man 'ud fetch up the devil hisself to see un pitched head foremost down to bottom o' say, which 'ud be the end I'd vote for un, and see it was car'd out too—iss, tho' his bones bore my own flesh and blid 'pon 'em, I wud!' and in his answer the old man's rugged face grew distorted with emotion.

But Adam neither spoke nor made comment on his words. His eyes were fixed on mid-air, his nostrils worked, his mouth quivered. Within him a legion of devils seemed to

have broken loose, and, sensible of the mastery they were gaining over him, he leaped up, and with the wild despair of

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one who catches at a straw to save him from destruction, it came upon him to rush down and look once more into the face of her who he had found so fair and proved so false.

'What is it you'm goin' to do then?' said Zebedee, seeing that Adam had stooped down and was raising the panel, by which exit was effected.

'Goin' to see if the coast's clear,' said Adam.

'Better bide where you be,' urged Zebedee. 'Joan or they's sure to rin up so soon as 'tis all safe.'

But Adam paid no heed; muttering something about knowing what he was about, he slipped up the partition and crept under, cautiously ascertained that the outer room was empty, and then, crossing the passage, stole down the stairs.

The door which led into the room was

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shut; but through a convenient chink Adam could take a survey of those within. Already his better self had begun to struggle in his ear, already the whisper which desire was prompting asked what if Eve stood there—alone and— But no, his glance had taken in the whole, quick as the lightning's flash the details of that scene were given to Roger's gaze. Eve bent forward, standing beside the door, over whose hatch a stranger's face was thrust, while Joan, close to the spot where Jerrem still lay hid, clasped her two hands as if to stay the breath which longed to cry, 'He's free.'... The blow dealt, the firebrand flung, each evil passion quickened into life, filled with jealousy and mad revenge, Adam turned swiftly round, and backward sped his way.

'They'm marched off, ain't 'em?' said old Zebedee, as, Adam having given the

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signal, he drew the panel of the door aside. ‘I’ve a bin listenin’ to their trampin’ past — why what’s the time, lad, eh?—must be close on break o’ day, ain’t it?’

‘Just about,’ said Adam, pushing back the shutter so that he might look out and see that no one stood near enough to overlook his descent.

‘Why, you bain’t goin’ agen, be ’ee?’ said Zebedee, in amazement. ‘Why, what for be ’ee hikin’ off like this then—eh, lad? Lord save us, he’s gone!’ he exclaimed as Adam, swinging himself by a dexterous twist on to the first ledge, let the shutter close behind him. ‘Wa-al, I’m blamed if this ain’t a rum start! Sommut gone wrong with un now. I’ll wager he’s a bin tiched up in the bunt soraehows for a guinea; and if so be ’tis with wan o’ they; they’m all sixes and sebens down below; so I’ll lave ’em bide a bit, and hab a tot o’

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liquor and lie down for a spell. Lord send ’em to know the valley o’ pace and quietness! But ’tis wan and all the same,

‘ “Friends and faws,  
To battle they gaws,  
And what they all fights about,  
Nawbody knows.” ’

It was broad daylight when Joan, having once before failed to make her uncle hear, gave such a vigorous rap that, starting up, the old man cried, ‘Ay, ay, mate,’ and with all speed unfastened the door.

Joan crept in, and some conversation ensued, in the midst of which, as the recollection of the events just past recurred to his mind, Zebedee asked:

‘What was up with Adam?’

‘With Adam?’ echoed Joan.

‘Iss; what made un start off like he did?’

Joan looked for a minute, then she lifted the stone bottle and shook its contents.

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‘Why, whatever be ’ee tellin’ up?’ she said.

‘Tellin’ up! why, you seed un down below, didn’t ’ee?—iss, you did, now.’

Completely puzzled what to think, Joan shook her head.

‘Lor’ ha’ massy! don’t never tell me he didn’t shaw hisself. Why, the sodgers was barely out o’ doors ’fore he comes tumblin’ in to shutter there, and after a bit he says, “I’ll just step down below,” he says, and out he goes; and in a quarter less no time back he comes tappin’ agen, and when I drawed open for un by he pushes, and ’fore I could say knife he was out and clane off.’

‘You haven’t a bin dreamin’ of it, have ’ee?’ said Joan, her face growing pale with apprehension.

‘Naw, ’tis Gospel truth, every ward. I’ve a had a toothful of liquor since,

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and a bit o’ a caulk, but not a drap more.’

‘Jerrem’s comin up into t’other room,’ said Joan, not wishing to betray all the alarm she felt; ‘will ’ee go into un there the whiles I rins down and says a word to Eve?’

‘Iss,’ said the old man; ‘and I’ll freshen mysen up a bit with a dash o’ cold watter; happen I may bring some more o’ it to my mind then.’

But, his ablutions over and the whole family assembled, Zebedee could throw no more light on the subject, the recital of which caused so much anxiety that Joan, yielding to Eve’s entreaties, decided to set off with all speed for Crumplehorn.

‘Mother, Adam’s all right— ain’t he here still, and safe?’ cried Joan, bursting into the kitchen where Mrs. Tucker, only just risen, was occupied with her house duties.

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‘Iss, plaise the Lord, and so far as I knaws of, he is,’ replied Mrs. Tucker, greatly startled by Joan’s unexpected appearance. ‘Why, what do ’ee mane, child, eh? But there,’ she added, starting up, ‘us ’ull make sure to wance and knaw whether ’tis lies or truth we’m tellin’.

Here, Sammy, off over so quick as legs can carry ’ee, and climber up and fetch Adam back with ’ee.’

Sammy started off, and Joan proceeded to communicate the cause of her uneasiness.



'Awh, my dear! is that all?' exclaimed Mrs. Tucker, at once pronouncing sentence on poor old Zebedee's known failng; 'then my mind's made easy agen. There's too much elbow crookin' 'bout that story for me to set any hold by it.'

'Do 'ee think so?' said Joan, ready to catch at any straw of hope.

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'Why, iss; and for this reason too, I——'

But at this moment Sammy appeared, and, without waiting for him to speak, the two women uttered a cry as they saw in his face a confirmation of their fears.

'Iss, 'tis every ward true; he's a gone shure 'nuf!' exclaimed Sammy; 'but by his own accord, I reckon, 'cos there ain't no signs o' nothin' bein' open 'ceptin' 'tis the hatch over by t'mill-wheel.'

'Awh, mother!' cried Joan, 'whatever's the manin' of it? My poor heart's a sinkin' down lower than iver. O Lord! if they should ha' cotched un, anyways.'

'Now, doan't 'ee take on like that, Joan,' said Mrs. Tucker. "'Tis like temptin' o' Providence to do such like. I'll be bound for't he's safe home alongs't afore now; he ain't like wan to act wild,

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and go steppin' into danger wi' both his eyes wide open.'

The possibility suggested, and Joan was oif again, back on her way to Polperro, too impatient to wait while her mother put on her bonnet to accompany her.

At the door stood Eve, breathless expectation betraying itself in her every look and gesture. Joan shook her head, while Eve's finger, quick laid upon her lip, warned her to be cautious.

'They're back,' she muttered, as Joan came up close; 'they've just marched past, and gone down to the quay.'

'What for?' cried Joan.

'I don't know; run and see, Joan; everybody's flocking that way.'

Joan ran down the street, and took her place among a mob of people watching with eager interest the movements of a soldier who, with much unnecessary parade

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and delay, was taking down the bill of reward posted outside the Three Pilchards. A visible anticipation of the effect about to be produced stirred the small red-coated company, and they wheeled round so as to take note of any sudden emotion produced by the surprise they felt sure awaited the assembly.

‘Whatever is it, eh?’ asked Joan, trying to catch a better sight of what was going on.

‘They’ m stickin’ up a noo reward, ’t seems,’ said an old man, close by.

‘’Taint no——’

But the swaying back of the crowd carried Joan with it. A surge forward, and then on her ear fell a shrill cry, and as the name of Jerrem Christmas started from each mouth, a hundred eyes seemed turned upon her. For a moment the girl stood dazed, staring around like some wild

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animal at bay; then, flinging out her arms, she forced those near her aside, and rushing forward to the front, made a desperate clutch at the soldier.

‘Speak—tell me—what’s writ there?’ she cried.

‘Writ there?’ said the man, startled by the scared face that was turned up to him.

‘Why, the warrant to seize for murder Jerrem Christmas, living or dead, on the king’s evidence of Adam Pascal!...’

And the air was rent by a cry of unutterable woe, caught up by each voice around, and coming back in echoes from far and near long after Joan lay a senseless heap on the stones upon which she had fallen.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

While the small party of soldiers were employed in attracting the attention of the inhabitants to the meaningless parade of taking down the offer of reward, and replacing it by the announcement of discovery, the larger portion of their company had already entered Uncle Zebedee's house and seized upon Jerrem, their object being to avoid any defence on the part of the neighbours, which Adam, with a view of preventing

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further search being made in the house, had assured them was certain to take place unless they could find a means of very speedily effecting their purpose. Although little disposed to be influenced by any of his suggestions, the force of this one was greatly strengthened by the necessity of dividing themselves into two parties, one of which must take Adam on, while the other returned to Polperro to seize the prisoner. And this they managed with such promptitude, that in less than ten minutes they had entered the house, and had dragged out Jerrem, who, halfstupefied, was pinioned and marched off before he was sufficiently aroused to thoroughly comprehend or realise his situation. The tattoo of the drums announced to the men on the quay that the capture was effected, and the party, hurrying off by the

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Warren, had joined their comrades, already half up Talland Lane, before those who had been spectators of one calamity could exchange their evil tidings with those who had witnessed the other.

Yes, Jerrem was gone! led off to disgrace, maybe to death, through the treachery of his shipmate, his comrade, his —all but in blood—brother. What would come next? Ghastly fears crowded in upon all present. Vengeance grew rank, hatred spread out on all sides; the earth thirsted for his blood, and the air was thick with curses showered on his name. Even Joan turned relentless, and flung pity from her heart; while old Zebedee, stung to the quick by the odium brought upon his name, disowned Adam for his son,

and took God to witness that so long as life remained every farthing he possessed should be spent in saving Jerrem.

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At early dawn of the next day, Joan, at the instance of her uncle and in company with several trusty friends, set off first for Liskeard, and then, if need be, to get on to Plymouth or to Bodmin—at one of which places Jerrem, they said, was certain to be tried. Bodmin gaol and Plymouth clink had both been familiar in days gone by to many who still lived to tell their tales and give their experience, and schemes were already abroad to put the larger boats on wheels, so that, if Bodmin were selected, conveyances might be supplied by which the mass of the people could be transported there, and see fair play dealt out to their comrade.

But days went by without Joan coming back, and Eve, who was left behind to look after Uncle Zebedee, had to sit and listen to the terrible outpourings of wrath against his son, to which the old man gave vent in

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the presence of his neighbours, and the more heartrending desolation of spirit which bowed him to the ground when no strange eye was near to witness his weight of woe.

So entirely had the chain of circumstances overpowered Eve that this climax of disaster seemed to have sealed up the flow of her emotions, and listening to and looking at the tears, exclamations, sighs, and groans, with which the excitable, sympathetic Cornish folk expressed their anguish and their indignation, she asked herself, 'Had all feeling left her? Did she no longer care what happened to herself or anybody around her? Was it nothing to her that her life was, as it were, at an end; her future blighted; her hopes dead; her love disgraced, reviled, disowned, and denounced by his own father and his own family?' Anyway, she could find no tears

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to bewail her sad fate in, no sighs to relieve her burdened heart, no groans to ease her desolate spirit: all was chaos, over which two dark shadows moved—the spectral forms of herself and Adam.

‘Uncle, what do you think’s become of him? where can he have gone to?’ Eve asked one night, as, no longer afraid of his neighbours seeing him, the old man tore off the armour under which in their presence he concealed every softer feeling.

‘To bottom o’ sae—clane gone out o’ the warld, I hope, where I wishes I was too!’ groaned Zebedee. ‘Awh I to think e’er a boy o’ mine should ha’ sarved us so! that he, us counted ’bove all other flesh and blood, should ha’ bin the whiles carryin’ ’bout the heart of a fausse Judas in his body!’

‘Perhaps he was mad,’ said Eve, dropping her voice in terror of the suggestion.

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‘Lord send I could see un ravin’!’ cried Zebedee. ‘Why,’ he added, his voice breaking under the pictured joy, ‘I’d thraw mysel’ ’pon un and hug un to me close, though he tore out my heart ’pon the spot for’t? Naw, lass, naw’ he sighed, ‘he ain’t mad: ’tis the devil has seized hold on un somehow! that’s what’s brought un to this.’

‘Didn’t he say nothing that seems now as if he’d told you that night what he meant to do?’ urged Eve.

‘Naw, nothin’.’

‘And you didn’t say anything to him, did you?’

‘Iss, there ’tis, that’s what sticks by me, and shaws me plain the vengeance that was in ’un, ’cos I tawld un that us was tryin’ to dale double, so as to manage for Jerrem to stale away.’

‘You didn’t tell him about the soldier?’

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faltered Eve. ‘No, you couldn’t, because you didn’t know anything about it yourself, did you?’

'Iss, I did. Jerrem tawld—he allays tawld me everythin', Jerrem did—and I ups and tells Adam.'

An icy grip seized Eve by the heart.

'Oh, uncle!' she groaned, 'could it be because of that—that he thought—about me?'

'What damon's in the maid now?' cried the old man, starting to his feet, and standing before her with clenched hands and quivering limbs. 'Do 'ee give heed to what 'tis you'm sayin' of Doan't 'ee knaw that if I thought that 'twas you was the cause of it, I'd scat out yer brains on the planchin where you'm standing to!'

Eve shrank back in terror, while Zebedee, after a minute's pause, his outburst ended, sank down into his former despondent attitude, muttering:

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'There, there! let be! let be! Awh, I wander what 'tis a-keepin' o' Joan so!—things is all bottom side upmost when her's is out o' hailin' distance.'

But two days more passed before Joan returned, bringing with her the startling intelligence that, instead of Bodmin or Plymouth, Jerrem was to be tried in London, to which place report said Adam had already been removed. But though every one thirsted for news, beyond the bare facts, Joan had little with which to satisfy them; she had failed in her endeavour to see Jerrem, of whose present whereabouts even no one could speak with certainty; she could learn no positive tidings of Adam, neither had she been able to ascertain any trustworthy account of the betrayal, only that it was in every one's mouth that Adam had done it, and had meant to do it from

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the first moment he found that the shot fired against his will would bring them all to trouble. Mr. Macey, the lawyer at Fowey, who had always managed Uncle Zebedee's money business, had said 'twas a terrible job of it, and though he couldn't take it himself, he'd see 'twas carried through by somebody sharper at such work than he was; and he'd sent uncle Zebedee word that not a stone should be left unturned, nor a guinea unspent, while hope was left that Jerrem's life might be saved; but he also sent a solemn

warning to him, and to all the *Lottery's crew*, to keep quiet and out of sight, until 'twas seen whether they meant to carry their engeance further, or whether Jerrem's life alone would serve to content them.

'Wa-al,' sighed Zebedee, who had listened eagerly to the whole of Joan's details, and patiently to old Mr. Macey's

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friendly warning, 'they'm fair words and kindly spoken; and so far as they goes I'll bide by 'em. But hark 'ee here, Joan, if the warst comes to warst, mind this, though they strings me up with un and we swings together, I'll stand yet wance more face to face with Jerrem afore he dies.'

'And that you shall,' said Joan; 'and so will I, too, for while in life us cherished un, so while life lasts us 'll never desert un.'

'And as for t'other wan,' said the stricken old man, his wrinkled face growing pinched and sharp, 'may the wound that he's planted in my heart rankle and fester in his own! May he live to know the want o' they hes' cast hisself off from, and die a stranger in a furrin land, and be buried where none who knawed un here can point to the grave that holds un!'

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'Uncle!' cried Eve, thrusting her fingers into her ears to keep out these terrible words from falling on them, 'uncle!' but Joan's upraised hand warned her to keep silent, and turning she saw that a sudden change had fallen upon Zebedee; his features had relaxed, his stretched eyelids were half closed over his glazed eyes, his head drooped low and was sunk down upon his breast.

For some minutes the two girls stood anxiously gazing at him, until Joan, terrified by the ashen pallor which had blanched his usually ruddy cheeks, ventured to speak, and at length succeeded in so far rousing him that he allowed himself to be persuaded to go to bed, and the two girls were left alone.

'You're wanting to run up to your mother's, Joan, ain't you?' said Eve. 'I'll sit and watch Uncle Zebedee while you're gone.'

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'No, never mind for to-night,' said Joan, wearily.

'Then let me go,' said Eve; 'twon't take me any time, and I want a breath of fresh air,' and she rose from her seat as she spoke; but Joan intercepted.

'No; now sit down,' she said hurriedly; 'there ain't no call for neither to go; 'sides which 'tis too late. I don' t want 'ee to go wanderin' 'bout in the dark—you'm too much given to goin' out by yourself—it won't do now; ' tain't safe, you know.'

Eve stared.

'Not safe, Joan! why not?'

'Well, now, I'd rather you didn't. Sit down now, like a dear.'

Eve sat down, but her curiosity awakened by Joan's agitated, nervous manner, she said:

'Joan, what is it? I'm sure you've heard something. Tell me, what makes

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you say we oughtn't to go out by ourselves, eh?'

Joan hesitated.

'I wonder,' she said, 'whether I'd best tell 'ee or not? It may be nothin' but a passel o' mazed talk, only I wouldn't have a finger o' harm laid 'pon 'ee for warlds.'

'Why, what is it, Joan?'

'Well, my dear, you see, I've see'd Jonathan. Through Adam's tellin', he was tooked off too, and lodged in Plymouth clink; but findin' they couldn't make un spake a word o' sense, when they carr'd Adam away they left Jonalhan bide, and there he is, and there I hopes he'll stay.'

'You do? What for?'

asked Eve, amazed.

'Why, 'cos o' you, Eve. Iss,' she said, answering her look of surprise, 'he's for all the world like anybody ravin' mad agen you.'



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‘Against me? But why against me?’

‘He will have that you’ m the cause of it all,’ said Joan; ‘and ’t seems now he let out to Adam ’bout the letter that Jerrem writ and he broffed, and then he drove un further mad by a passel o’ lies he’s somehow got tagged on t’ it, that you’d ha’ told the sergeant, and through that he dropped a bit o’ paper, tellin’ of it all, into the rendevoos winder—for seemin’ that was how they got scent o’ the *Lottery’s* landin’.’

‘And Adam believed him?’ gasped Eve.

‘He must have,’ sobbed Joan; ‘and then I reckon somethin’ he see’d or heered that night finished un.’

‘Oh, Joan!’ cried Eve, flinging herself down and burying her head on Joan’s lap.

‘Iss; don’t it seem as if us all must have some hand in tightenin’ the rope that’s round that poor sawl’s neck?’

‘And Adam could believe that I would

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betray them—would betray him?’ and clasping her hands, Eve looked up as if making an appeal to some unseen presence. ‘Him,’ she said, ‘for whom I would have given my life—for whom,’ she cried, breaking down, ‘oh! Joan, I would give my life now!’

‘Iss, I know you would,’ said Joan, hugging her close to her. ‘Why, haven’t I called un everything bad before ’ee, o’ purpose ’cos I should see ’ee flare up agen me for doin’ it, and haven’t I blessed ’ee in my heart for stickin’ to un through thick and thin? Awh, Eve, my dear, don’t ’ee judge me hard for keeping all to Jerrem’s side. ’Taint only love for Jerrem makes me do it, but that Adam shan’t never be fouled by havin’ the stain o’ blood restin’ ’pon un. If ’twas only for that, I’d spend my last breath to save Jerrem from hangin’.’

‘They think they’ll try to hang him?’ said Eve, in a faltering voice.

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'Iss, for certain they'll try, and though I didn't say so to uncle, all Mr. Macey fears is, that wan life won't content 'em neither.'

'Could Adam have known that?' whispered Eve.

'He knawed 'twas death to whoever was took, and a free pardon to whoever told on 'em, or else why didn't he take and knock him on the head hisself? Jonathan says,' she added, after a minute's pause, 'that when he'd told un 'bout you, he sprung on un like a tiger, and shook un like a rat; and after, when it comed to 'bout the letter, he roared out like a bull belvin', and then fell flat down 'pon his face like one struck for death.'

'Oh, why—why did Jerrem send that letter!' moaned Eve, wringing her hands in desperation.

'Iss, why indeed?' said Joan; 'though

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that could have had nothin' to do with the findin's out that I can see; for if 'twas the last word I spoked, I could take an oath to never havin' quitted a word 'bout it to a single livin' sawl; and as to you meetin' the sergeant, why, you never stirred from this, did 'ee? Let's see, what did us do that day?' she added, trying to recall the past events, while Eve, sensible of having concealed her meeting with Reuben May, averted her face, so that Joan might not perceive its terrible pallor.

Over and over again had Eve endeavoured to screw up her courage to tell Joan of this meeting, since which one misfortune after another had crowded so thickly upon them, as to make each endeavour seem inopportune. For days after the interview, she had every now and again been seized with terror lest Reuben should make his appearance; and great was her

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relief when, as time went on, she began to be released from this anxiety. But no suspicion that he could in any way have been connected with the betrayal had ever entered her mind until now, when, as Joan spoke of her being the supposed betrayer, a sudden dart of terror seemed to strike her. Was it possible? Could she have said

anything that Reuben had laid hold of against them? For an instant Eve wrestled with the doubt, and tried to crush it; but so vividly did it rise up before her, that at any cost she felt it must be set at rest, and seizing Joan's hand, she blurted out:

'Joan, there's one thing I've never told you of—that the day we expected them all back, after Jerrem's letter had come, I went out for a bit by Talland way, and there, just down before you come to the Warren stile, I met——'

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'Not he! No, doan't'ee tell me you see'd the sergeant,' cried Joan, forcing her hands up to Eve's mouth, as if to keep back the words.

'The sergeant, no!' said Eve indignantly, 'but the young man I told you of from London—Reuben May!'

'Reuben May, Eve! Why however did he come down 'long this ways? What broffed un here, eh?'

'He was coming to see me,' said Eve.

'He had come in Capen Triggs' vessel, because of something he'd heard about us, and the minute he saw me he began about uncle and Adam, calling them both thieves and robbers, and I can't tell what.'

'But that wouldn't make 'ee tell un nothin' 'bout their landin'?' said Joan.

'No. I feel sure I never mentioned that. I told him they were expected home,

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because I feared he'd want to come that night and see you all; but then we fell to quarrelling again, and parted in such anger that I said I hoped never to see his face again.'

'But whatever made 'ee keep it to yourself, and never spake of it 'til now?' said Joan, turning her eyes upon Eve with a look of anxious scrutiny.

'I never meant to keep it from you, Joan,' said Eve earnestly, 'and only that your mother and Mrs. Climo and the rest were here, I should have told you the minute I got back; then, when they were gone, I said, I'll tell her as soon as we come down from the cliff:

but what happened there put everything else out of my head for that night, and since then, though I've had it on my lips to say twenty times, something has always come up to hinder me from speaking.'

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'I'd a made sure you'd never cast eyes on any man outside the place,' said Joan, perplexed by this new opening out of difficulties.

'I wish now, more than ever, that it had never happened,' sighed Eve. 'Still, Joan, the more I think of it the more certain I feel that Reuben May had no hand in it, unless it could be that anybody might have watched us together. That's not impossible, although I never met a single soul, coming or going.'

Joan made no comment; for a minute she seemed to struggle and debate with her thoughts, then, suddenly looking up, she said:

'Eve, you'll have to go back home to wance; it 'ull never do to have 'ee stayin' here now.'

'But why, Joan? Has what I have told you made you think ill of me? Don't

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you believe that I am speaking the truth when I say that what kept me silent were the bitter words that Reuben May spoke. I meant to tell you of it because I had spoken of him to you before, but I could never have told Adam, that one I had counted as my greatest friend had called him a thief over whose head the gallows was dangling;' and at the remembrance of how near those words seemed now to the truth, Eve burst into a passion of tears.

'Now don't 'ee go for to cry like that,' exclaimed Joan, dashing away the drops which were blinding her own eyes. 'Whatever 'tis, I loves 'ee too well to think harm of 'ee for it; and whether 'twas he or some other man, t' mischief's done now and can't be set straight agen. But, Eve, us mustn't let more harm come to us if we can hinder it, and I towld 'ee that I didn't like the

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angry words and the manin' looks o' Jonathan, and he gived two or three twists o' hissself while he was spakin' that made me tmni as cold as death, and 't seemed as if I couldn't draw my eyes away from the glarin' roll he was lookin' about un with.'

'Oh, I'm not afraid of Jonathan,' said Eve, trying to brave down the tremor of nervous fear which was creeping through her; 'a poor, half-witted creature who says one thing this minute, and forgets all about it the next.'

'Awh, my dear, don't 'ee sneer at Jonathan,' said Joan reprovingly; 'he's a bitter foe, I'll warn 'ee. And when,' she added, dropping her voice to a whisper, 'he talks of maidens who loves to stand gazin' 'ponthe sea, growin' dizzy and fallin' in, and o' folks bein' 'ticed fro' their homes, and never comin' back 'longs agen, 'tis time to steer clear of un, Eve, for there's devilry in

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his words, and mischief broodin' in his mind.'

'Why, Joan!' gasped Eve; 'surely he wouldn't? You don't think he'd—murder me?' and, as the words came trembling out, her very lips turned white with horror.

'I wouldn't like to lave 'ee in his way,' faltered Joan.

'But he'd be afraid—wouldn't he?'

'Wa-al, if so be he could get free to tell his story there's no knawin' what might come of it. I had to dale double with un as it was, and manage so that neither wan but me got in to see un; and 'fore he gets set free altogether, Eve, you must put miles atween you and they, who, when they'd listened to his story, would awnly be too quick to shut their eyes to what they wasn't axed to take part in.'

'Of course, in that case,' said Eve, "'tis

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best I should go back by myself again to London.'

And, as the words came slowly dragging forth, the narrow street, the obscured sky, the stifling air, weighed down upon her, and crushed her with a sense of gloom unknown

before, when her thirst for freedom was but a want unsatisfied. Her whole being revolted against the cruel exchange; her nature cried out in protest, but in vain.

The more they discussed the point, the more convinced they both became that there was no other possible alternative, and, the money for her journey being supplied by Uncle Zebedee, under pretence of accompanying Jochabed Giles in one of her stolen visits to Plymouth, Eve set off late one afternoon, intending to rest by the way, and get on the next day to Plymouth, whence she would take coach to London.

There was to be no leave-taking, for

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no one must know that she was going away. So, with only a nod of good-bye to Uncle Zebedee, and a moment's desperate clinging to Joan, Eve left the house, and, in silent sadness, followed Jochabed down the street, past the Warren, and away along by the cliff path until they came to the jutting point which, once past, shuts out all view of Polperro from beyond.

Here Eve paused, and, motioning Jochabed to go on, she turned and bade her eyes gaze round upon the scene, and look their last farewell.

The sun, which all day long had shone hot and fierce, had run its course, and sunk to rest, leaving its trail of glory to tip the hills above, and be reflected down in crimson glow upon the sea below. The mist of heat, which all day long had hung over the land, though rolled away from

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there, still floated in filmy clouds before the harbour's mouth, veiling the little haven, and casting broad shadows on the rugged cliffs, up whose steep sides the white-faced houses clung, higher and higher still, till they were lost amid the tangle of the ridge which crowns the valley's sides.

Like an echo awakened by some tuneful strain which jars on the ear and smites the heart, because the voice which gave it melody is still and hushed for ever, so the sunset calm of that peaceful scene jarred on the misery of her who stood stricken and desolate.

Involuntarily she shut her eyes that through them at least her heart should be no longer pierced; and when she opened them again, a mist of gathering tears obscured her view and blotted out the prospect from her sight.

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Then, slowly turning, Eve went her way, knowing that while this life should last, the face of that fair earth would never meet her eyes again.

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#### CHAPTER IX.

Reuben May had been but a short time back in London, when, one evening as he was closing the shutters of his small shop, a boy presented himself saying he was the landlady's nephew at Knight's Passage, and had been sent by her to ask Mr. May for some of the things he was taking care of for Eve Pascal.

'Why, what does she want them for?' asked Reuben, curtly.

'She wants them for Eve Pascal herself,

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said the boy. 'Eve Pascal has come back again; she came back this morning, only she hadn't got any one to send till now.'

'All right,' said Reuben, returning to his shutter-closing, and then proceeding to fasten the door; 'I'll go round and speak to her myself.'

'Then you won't want me?' said the boy, not sorry to be released by his stern-looking companion.

'No, you can go your own way,' replied Reuben, already several paces in advance, and walking with such rapid strides that a few minutes brought him to the house, which had been the scene of all the romance his life had ever known.

'Oh, Mr. May!' but, paying no heed to the landlady's voice, and without a pause, Reuben ran up the different flights of stairs, knocked at the door, opened it, and

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found himself at once in the presence of Eve.

‘Eve!’

‘Reuben!’

And then silence, each looking at the other, wondering what could have wrought such a change; for the bodily fatigue and mental anxiety undergone by Reuben had told as heavily on his appearance as the sorrow Eve had endured had told on hers, although the absence of original comeliness made the alteration in him less generally noticeable.

‘Have you been ill, Eve?’ and as he put the question a wild thought sprang up that perhaps her suffering had been on his account, and, stirred by this prompting, Reuben took her hand in his and looked with tender anxiety into her face.

‘No,’ she said, quietly withdrawing her

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hand; ‘I have not been ill. Have you? You look very ill.’

‘Oh, that’s on account of my having walked most of the way back here from Plymouth; it’s a stiffish tramp, you know, and took the little flesh I had off my bones.’

Eve paused for an instant, as if trying to repress the over-haste of her question, then she said, while her face was half turned away:

‘Did you go straight on to Plymouth after I saw you?’

‘I got to Plymouth before daylight the next morning. I was forced to rest a bit here and there on the way, as I’d come the same ground once before that day; but the night was fine, so, as I didn’t care about stopping anywheres, I stumped on without waiting to see Triggs even—made a message.

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do for him—and started off on my journey.’

‘Then you never went near Looe at all?’ Eve exclaimed with eagerness.



'Ah!' replied Reuben, evading a direct reply by a little laugh, under which he heralded his answer, 'you may be sure I didn't stop to inquire the names of all the places I passed through; I was in too hot haste to turn my back on them for anything of that sort.'

'Oh, thank God!' said Eve, and at the words her whole mind and body seemed to relax from the strain imposed on them by the suspicion that, in some indistinct way, on her had rested the blame of the betrayal.

'Thank God?' repeated Reuben, sharply.

'Thank God for what?'

'For not making me the betrayer of those who put their trust in me.'

Reuben's face turned crimson; but so

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engrossed was Eve by her own satisfaction, that his sudden confusion was lost upon her, and she continued:

'I may as well tell you, Reuben, that a terrible trouble has fallen upon me and mine since I parted with you. That very night some one played us false, and betrayed the *Lottery* into the hands of the revenue.'

'I can't see what else was to be expected,' said Reuben, stolidly; 'when men run their necks into a noose, they may be pretty sure of some day finding the knot drawn tight.'

'I was so afraid that you might have laid hold on anything I said to you, and had been led in any way to tell it against them,' sighed Eve, paying no heed to the taunt with which Reuben had hoped to sting her.

'And supposing I had' he said, 'oughtn't you to thank me for doing it?'

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Don't tell me, Eve,' and he threw into his tone a mixture of contempt and bitterness, 'that you've come to take it as a trial, that those you talk of belonging to are forced into taking to honest ways.'

‘Those I belong to have been hunted down like dogs,’ she cried. ‘A price has been set upon their lives, and one of them has been dragged away up here that they may try and hang him if they can.’

‘What!’ exclaimed Reuben, starting to his feet, ‘hang him! Who are they going to hang? What can they hang him for? Is it your cousin Adam Pascal, you’re talking of?’

‘No; I wish it was,’ said Eve, her face quivering with the emotion the relation of these details stirred within her; ‘but though ’twas in fair fight, ’twas Jerrem shot the man.’

‘Shot what man?’ gasped Reuben.

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‘The revenue man. The *Lottery* was lying still, waiting for the tide to come up, when the boats crept up behind them in the dark, and, if it hadn’t been for Adam, not one among their crew would have lived to tell the tale; but by his word he kept his own men quiet, all but Jerrem, who fired his gun, and down the revenue man fell—dead.’

Reuben stifled the exclamation which rose to his lips, and Eve, to whose days of pent-up misery the repetition of these woes seemed to bring relief, continued:

‘At first all blamed Adam and praised Jerrem, but almost at once the soldiers came, and they’d only barely time to hide away from them. Adam went to the mill, and was there a week and more; and then some one told him that ’twas I was the cause of their being betrayed, and drove him so mad with jealousy and rage that he

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told of the place where Jerrem was hid; and the next day the soldiers came again, dragged Jerrem out, and carried him away. And now, though uncle spends every guinea he has got, ’tis almost sure that through Adam’s word Jerrem will be hanged; for they say they’ve brought them both to London, and that they’re lodged in Newgate gaol.’

Up to this time Reuben’s eyes seemed riveted upon Eve’s face, but as she paused he bent his head, and sunk it down upon the table near—a movement that at any former time would naturally have awakened some surprise, but now so familiar had Eve grown

with the aspect of sorrow, that she regarded all visible emotion as an outburst of the certain sympathy to be expected from her hearers.

‘Now you know why it is Reuben,’ she continued, ‘that I feel so glad that you had

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no hand in anything of this—for you must overlook the anger that I showed at that time. I’ve been sorry for it often since, and feared you’d count me overbold for talking as I did. Not that I’m changed, Reuben, nor think one bit the less of Adam for what’s happened. No! and though all the world should turn their backs on him, I’d stand by his side; and to prove it I must find him out and tell him that, in spite of all they’ve told him, in heart and tongue I’ve never been untrue to him.’ And filled with the desire of seeing the man she loved, Eve clasped her hands, and sat trying to resolve her plans, while Reuben commenced pacing the little room with a troubled air. Suddenly bringing himself to a stand before Eve, he said:

‘Eve, be sure your sin will find you out.’

‘No, Reuben; no,’ and she put up her

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hand as if to avert the continuance of any homily, ‘’tis of no good talking like that. Sorrow has sealed up my heart against taking condemnation or comfort from anything of that sort.’

‘It isn’t of you I’m thinking!’ he exclaimed. ‘Oh!’ he cried, giving vent to his pent-up feelings, ‘down into what a pitfall a minute’s evil passion may fling a man. To think that I, while I was crying vengeance against others, was drawing down the wrath of God upon my own head, stamping myself with the brand of Cain, and doing the devil’s work by sending men to death with all their sins still heavy on their souls.’

‘Reuben, what is it you mean?’ and seizing hold of him with both her hands, Eve gazed into his face.

‘That the thought you had was true,’ he said, ‘and that ’twas me who dropped

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the paper in, that told them where the *Lottery* would be found;’ and a tremor ran through Reuben’s frame, his pulses for a moment quickened, and then grew faint and seemed to die away; while Eve uttered neither word nor sound, her eyes drooped, her hold relaxed, and tottering she sank back into the seat behind her, and there sat motionless and still as one carved out of stone.

The abandonment of hope, the unutterable despair of face and form, so unlike anything which Reuben had ever seen in Eve, touched him as no reproaches could have done. That depth of misery which words can neither describe nor express pierced his inmost soul, and added to the stings with which conscience was already smiting him. Not for the act of betrayal, for, had there been no Eve to prompt him, Reuben would have looked upon it

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as an act of justice that he should aid the law against men, who set order and government at defiance, and though each man on board had met his death, Reuben would have held his conscience free of any tittle of reproach; but equitable and unyielding to himself as well as to others, he full well knew that when he wrote the words which sealed the *Lottery’s* fate, justice was clean gone out of his mind. He neither knew nor cared what might become of the men whose safety he betrayed; the whole rancour of his hate was turned against his rival, and the paper he flung into the Rendezvous window was as much a blow aimed at Adam as if he had dealt him a thrust, and had stabbed him in the dark.

‘Eve,’ he said, ‘words are but poor things at a time like this; and if I spoke from now till ever, I couldn’t make you see by them the misery I feel, but if you’ll

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trust me this far, I swear by Him who sees us both, and knows our hearts, that no stone shall be unturned, no thing undone. I’ll walk London over, and neither rest day nor night till I find out Adam Pascal and his comrade, and tell them the whole truth. And

when I say this,' he added, his face working with emotion, 'don't fancy 'tis because of love of you, Eve. I know that, come what may, we never can be nothing more than friends now; but oh,' and he held out his hands towards her, 'let's at least be that, Eve—let me help you to set yourself clear with the man, who, be he what he may, it seems you've given all your heart to, and you—you help me to rid myself of the thought that I've led into sin, and hurried on to death, fellow-creatures whose godless lives I'd now give my own to save. Together, if we set our minds to work, there's no knowing what we mayn't

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do yet. Warrants have been squashed, and pardons given, when men have reached the very gallows' foot; and as for getting in, why Mr. Osborne knows Newgate Prison every inch, from going there with old Silas Told, when he was living, and he'll do anything for me, so there'll be no fear about that. And you know *me*, Eve; you know how when I'm set upon a thing I strain my utmost nerve to get it done?' and pausing, he stood watching with mingled hope and fear the effect of his words; first, the flush of spreading colour, then the quivering mouth and eyes, and finally the rush of tears which lifted up and cleared away that stone-like gloom. A ray of hope seemed once more near, and catching at the feeblest chance of being brought again face to face with Adam, Eve, unable to speak, stretched out her hand, which Reuben took, grasped it almost to pain, then let it go, and with it

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every hope of love that lingered still for Eve.

The rest of the time was spent in explanations of the various incidents relating to the all-engrossing event, the details which bore upon it, the circumstances which surrounded it, until, from following out all these into their different channels, Reuben began to have a clearer conception of the men, their characters, their individual virtues and collective failings, growing interested in them almost against his will. The hour was late before he

recollected that until he reached his home he could hardly settle his plans, so as to secure an entrance into the prison on the following day.

Bidding Eve good-night, he left the house, and walked away, only stopping at the turn of the street to step into the road, and cast his wistful gaze up to the window

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of the room, which to him now was as the tomb of his dead love.

An ordinary working-man standing in an obscure street is not a figure to arouse much interest, and Reuben's stolid face gave little index to the varied emotions which surged within his troubled heart. He was able to return the gruff good - night the watchman gave, and the old man, passing on, went wondering as to the cause of such anxious survey on Reuben's part. For as he stood his thoughts ran here and there, and by the magic of their power showed to his view the long-gone joys of other days. He watched the struggling birth of love, scorched himself in its flame, and felt by turns the tortures and delights its presence gives to those who live on hope alone; then sadly saw it fade from out his sight, sicken and faint almost to death, and yet

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it did not die until by that one action he had robbed it of life and killed it evermore. Yes, love was dead, and love was Eve; and for Reuben May the Eve he had loved so fondly lived no longer.

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## CHAPTER X.

During the time which had elapsed since the night on which Eve Pascal and Reuben May renewed their bond of friendship, many an anxious incident had occurred to test its value and cement its strength.

Jerrem and Adam were familiar names to Reuben now, and the men who bore them were often before his eyes and constantly in his thoughts. Prepared as Reuben had been for undergoing much awkwardness in delivering himself of the tale

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he had to tell, he found he had greatly underrated the pain and humiliation he actually felt when, through the interest of his friend, he found himself within the walls of Newgate and in the presence of Adam. Reuben was no coward, yet it needed all the strength of his strictly disciplined mind, to open up and lay bare before a rival's eyes those wounds which love had made, and time had had no space to heal.

He shrunk from placing in front of Adam the picture of himself and Eve, as they had stood in the days when, Adam all unknown, the balance of a happy future seemed trembling still within the hand of Fate; and as he spoke, from time to time he paused, hoping some word or sign would make his task more easy: but Adam never spoke nor turned aside his eyes, and under that fixed gaze Reuben was forced to tell his tale out to the end, constraining his pride

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to give out word for word what Eve had said in Adam's praise, and searing the green memory of his love by making his lips repeat those vows which she had told him bound her to another.

At length the task was ended, the jealous rage, the mad revenge, was all confessed, and satisfied that, whatever guilt it might please Adam to lay to his charge, he had at least shown that Eve was free from any shadow of stain, Reuben paused, and the two so strangely linked stood looking at each other with envy, jealousy, distrust clouding their minds, while a chord of sympathy drew them together, as they recognised a similitude in their actions which made each self-abasement uttered find an echo in its listener's breast. Proud, stern, unyielding to emotion as both these men had lived, it was not in them to take comfort in the shifts and

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excuses weaker natures find; the hearts that had refused Pity for their neighbours would not entreat her because they now stood in need. As they had judged their fellows, so they arraigned themselves, and thus unwittingly rendered the first atonement man is called upon to make. The sight of Adam's strong, powerful form shaken and bowed down by the remorse he strove in vain to control moved Reuben strangely. The haggard pallor of his striking face, the sunken eyes, the untasted food, the unslept-in bed, each told its tale of misery and woe, and opened out to Reuben a depth of despair his own experience hitherto had furnished him with no gauge to measure. What if with no further warning he fetched up Eve to Adam's aid—the thought would bear no hesitation, a thousand jealous 'Noes' battled with the suggestion; but Reuben's better self resolved to have its

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way, and seizing the opportunity of Adam's head being bent down in his arms, Reuben went swiftly out and along down to the keeper's room, where Eve had been left impatiently awaiting his return.

Although the grating of the hinge roused Adam, he neither stirred nor moved until, satisfied by the unbroken silence that Reuben had left him to himself, he ventured to raise his head.

Where could he go? where hide himself from human gaze? And as the thought of all his shame came crowding to his mind, he started up and wildly stared around, and then around again, seeing each time the walls, which looked so near, draw nearer still. No hope, no hope! here he must live, until the hour when those who brought him here would drag him forth to swear away his comrade's life. O God! how helpless he felt; and

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as he let himself drop down each limb gave way, and nerveless fell, as if dejection claimed him for her own. The time had been when Adam's mind was racked by



thoughts of what lay in the hearts of those he had left behind; their pictured hatred and contempt stung him to madness; the words they would say, the curses they were uttering, seemed ever ringing in his ears. But Reuben's tale had for the time swept this away, and filled its place with dark remorse of what he had done to Jerrem. True, Reuben had shown that Jerrem's hand had wrought his own and their destruction, but what of that? Adam through him had wreaked his vengeance on them all—had, Judas-like, delivered them to death; henceforth, branded and disgraced, he must be an outcast or a wanderer. As this fallen spectre of himself rose up and flitted in his sight, a cry of wild despair

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burst forth, wrenched from the depths of his proud heart—a cry which some one near sent echoing back, and as it came his hands were caught, and Pity seemed to stretch her arms, and fold him to her breast.

Was it a nightmare he was waking from? some hideous dream in which our bodies slumber, while our fancies live a lifetime? Would this vision of Eve (for Eve it was who knelt close by his side, her arms around his neck) melt away and fade as many a one of her had done before? She calls him love—her love, the husband of her heart—what, he, this guilty outcast! Can he be this to any one, and most of all to Eve?

A finger's touch seemed laid upon the veil which hitherto had shut out hope from.

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Adam's view, and as it shrivelled up and rolled away, the light revealed that Mercy still sat throned on high; and bowing down his head on Eve's neck, he let his stricken soul take comfort in the thought.

But while Adam was thus cast down under suffering, sorrow had taken but a slight hold on Jerrem, who, after the first shock produced by the horrors of a place then branded as 'the darkest seat of woe this side of hell,' gradually regained his old elasticity, and was soon ready to treat, laugh, and drink with all who came near him.

His merry jokes, his quaint sea songs, the free handling he gave to his plentiful supply of money, all served to insure his popularity; so that instead of the man sunk under misery and despair whom Reuben, after leaving Adam, had girded himself up

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to encounter, he came upon Jerrem rollicking and gay, a prime favourite with all the authorities, and a choice spirit amid the crew of tried and untried prisoners, who in those days crowded together the foul wards of Newgate.

Fresh from the sight of Adam's dark remorse, filled with compunction at the thought of all the ills their joint passions had hurled on Jerrem's head, Reuben had invested Jerrem with a sense of wrong, to make reparation for which he had come prepared to offer whatever sacrifice he should demand. To find the man for whom all this feeling had been conjured up reckless and unconcerned, casting oaths against his ill-luck one moment, and cutting jokes at his possible fate the next, jarred upon Reuben terribly, and made him at once decide that it would be worse than useless to urge upon him any

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necessity for taking thought for his soul when he was so utterly reckless as to what would become of his body. The story Reuben had to tell of himself and Eve, the betrayal, and the suspicions it had aroused against Eve in Adam, merely affected Jerrem as a matter for surprise and curiosity. He seemed pleased to hear that Eve was close at hand, but still expressed no wish to see her. He talked about Adam, and, with a painful absence of all malice, told Reuben to say to him that he'd best lay it thick on his back, so that the judge and jury would let the other chaps go free.

The circumstance of being brought to London to be tried seemed to afford him immense satisfaction—a thing, he said, that hadn't happened for sixty years and more, when old—swung for it; and then he fell to wondering how soon that might be his fate, and if so, how many from Polperro

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would make the stretch to come so far. He'd promise them it shouldn't be for nothing: he'd show the Cornish men that he could cut his capers game. Only one subject seemed able to sober or subdue his reckless spirit, and this was any mention of Joan or Uncle Zebedee: to them the poor soul seemed to cling with all the love his nature could command. And when Reuben, instructed by Eve, told him how stricken down the old man lay, and further on promised to write for him all the messages he wished to send to Joan, a heart of wax seemed given to his keeping, in which it now must be his care to mould the little good there yet was time to teach. And so it happened that in all his future visits— and every hour that Reuben had to spare was given up to Jerrem—Joan was the theme that threaded all their discourse; and by her power Jerrem's soft heart and

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softer nature became to Reuben as an open page, wherein he read of actions in which good and bad were so mixed up and jumbled, that, in the very midst of his reproof and condemnation, Reuben was often forced to stand abashed before some act of generous pity which found no echo in his former life. And out of this humility, which grew in strength, there sprang forth greater merits than from all the weary efforts he made at working out his own atonement; for Reuben, like Adam, had been over-satisfied about his own rectitude, and took pride in the knowledge, that, if ever he had committed a wrong, he had acknowledged it freely and expiated it to the uttermost farthing—while Jerrem, for the first time in his life brought to see guilt in what he had counted pleasure, scarce dared to listen to a hope of mercy for himself, but rather craved Reuben to beg it

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for the many who had been thoughtless sharers in his folly. His ruling desire was to see Joan once more, and no sooner was he told that the Admiralty Session had begun, and that his day of trial—although not fixed—was near at hand, than he begged Reuben to write and ask Joan to delay her promised visit no longer; and this Reuben did, adding on

his own account that, from what the lawyer said, it would be best she came at once, by the coach which would reach London on the following Thursday-week, on which day Reuben would be waiting to receive her.

Now, at the onset of this disaster, had such a letter reached Polperro, not a man in the place but, short of knowing it would cost his life, would have risked all else to go to London, and if Jerrem was to die, give him courage by mustering round their

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comrade at the last. But the downpour of disaster had cowed these, daring spirits, and the men who had not known what fear meant so long as success was secure, now trembled and gave way, under the superstitious certainty that ill-luck was following them and misfortune had marked them for her own. Their energies paralysed, they succumbed to what they looked upon as Fate, and in most cases were seized without a struggle, and led off to the nearest prisons without an effort on their own part towards resistance.

The money over which—from the small scope for spending it—they had seemed so lavish and reckless, when needed for lawyers and counsel and bribes, went but a small way; and though they made a common purse of all their hoards, not a day passed without some house being stripped of the substance which adorned it, so that

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money might be got for the husband, the son, the brothers, who had brought these treasures home.

The women, on their knees, pressed on the farmers' wives their chintzes, their lace, their gaudy stock of jewellery; and when this market failed, toiled along to Liskeard, Plymouth and Launceston, carrying their china, silver-plate, and bowls, in the hope of finding somebody to buy them.

With one, often two, revenue cutters always in sight, landing parties of king's men, who—recalling ugly thoughts of the hated press-gang—roamed hither and thither, ready to seize any one who happened to show his face; with half the husbands, sons and

brothers in Bodmin Gaol or Plymouth Clink, and the rest skulking in farm-houses or lying hidden in the secret places; with plenty vanishing

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and poverty drawing nigh; the past circumstances which had led to this desolation were swallowed up in the present misery it had entailed upon them; and though every one now knew the whole story as it stood—how that through Jerrem writing to Eve, she had had it in her power to tell Reuben May, her former lover, who, led on by jealousy, had betrayed them to the revenue men, so familiar had Reuben's good services to Jerrem become known, that it was taken as only one more of his many friendly actions that he should write to Joan, urging her to come to London without delay, and promising to meet her and see that she was taken care of. If any among them thought that Joan would go probably to Eve's home, they made no mention of it; for Eve's name was by a tacit understanding banished from their mouths, and the

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memory of her lay as a seal to that dark sepulchre wherein, with bitter scorn and hate, Adam lay buried.

There was no question now of Uncle Zebedee going, for the confinement, the excitement, and the degradation had been too much for the old man, whose free and happy life had never known trouble or restraint, and his mind had gradually weakened under the burden imposed upon it; so that now, except when some unexpected incident roused the flickering flame of memory, the past few months were blotted from his mind, and, in company with Jonathan—who, broken down by illusage, and turned out of prison to die, had managed to crawl back to the friends he knew he should find shelter with—he roamed about harmless and contented, always watching for the *Lottery's* return, and promising, when she did come back,

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that he would give them all a fling such as Polperro had not seen for many a day.

It was an easy matter to cheat him now, and when, Joan's journey all arranged, she stepped into the boat which was to take her round to Plymouth, and left old Zebedee standing on the shore, raising his thin cracked voice to fetch her ear with cheery messages for Jerrem and for Adam, whom she was going to meet, her cup of bitterness seemed to overflow.

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## CHAPTER XI.

From the day on which Adam knew that the date of Jerrem's trial was fixed, all the hope which the sight of Eve had rekindled was again completely extinguished, and, refusing every attempt at consolation, he threw himself into an abyss of despair a hundredfold more dark and bitter than before.

The thought that he—captain and leader as he had been—should stand in court confronted by his comrades and neighbours (for Adam, ignorant of the disasters which had

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overtaken them, believed half Polperro to be on their way to London), and there swear away Jerrem's life and turn informer, was something too terrible to be dwelt on with even outward tranquillity, and, abandoning everything which had hitherto sustained him, he gave himself up to all the terrors of remorse and despair. It was in vain for Reuben to reason, or for Eve to plead; so long as they could suggest no means by which this dreaded ordeal could be averted, Adam was deaf to all hope of consolation. There was but one subject which interested him, and only on one subject could he be got to speak, and that was the chances there still remained of Jerrem's life being spared; and to furnish him with some food for this hope, Eve began to loiter at the gates, talk to the warders and the turnkeys, and mingle with the many groups who on some business

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ness or pretext were always assembled about the yard, or stood idling in the various passages with which the prison was intersected. One morning it came to her mind, how would it be for Adam to escape, and so not be there to prove the accusation he had made of Jerrem having shot the man? With scarce more thought than she had bestowed on many another passing suggestion which seemed for the moment practical and solid, but as she turned it round lost shape and floated into air, Eve made the suggestion, and to her surprise found it seized on by Adam as an inspiration. Why, he'd risk *all*, so that he escaped being set face to face with Jerrem and his former mates. Adam had but to be assured the strain would not be more than Eve's strength could bear, before he had adopted with joy her bare suggestion, clothed it with possibility, and by it seemed to regain all his past energy. Could

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he but get away, and Jerrem's life be spared, all hope of happiness would not be over. In some of those distant lands to which people were then beginning to go, life might begin afresh. And as his thoughts found utterance in speech, he held out his hand to Eve, and in it she laid her own; and Adam needed nothing more to tell him that whither he went, there Eve too would go. There was no need for vows and protestations now between these two, for though to each the other's heart lay bare, a word of love scarce ever crossed their lips. Life seemed too sad and time too precious to be whiled away in pleasant speeches, and often when together—burdened by the weight of all they had to say, yet could not talk about—the two would sit for hours and neither speak a word. But with this proposition of escape a new channel was given to them, and as they discussed their different plans,

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the dreadful shadow which at times had hung between them was rolled away and lifted out of sight. Inspired by the prospect of action, of doing something, Adam roused himself to master all the difficulties; his old foresight and caution began to revive, and

the project which had on one day looked like a desperate extremity, grew by the end of a week into a well-arranged plan whose success seemed more than possible. Filled with anxiety for Eve, Reuben gave no hearty sanction to the experiment, besides which he felt certain that now neither Adam's absence nor presence would in any way affect Jerrem's fate; added to which, if the matter was detected it might go hard with Adam himself. But his arguments proved nothing to Eve, who, confident of success, only demanded from him the promise of secrecy; after which she thought, as some questions might be put to him, the

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less he knew the less he would have to conceal.

Although a prisoner, inasmuch as liberty was denied to him, Adam was in no way subjected to that strict surveillance to which those who had broken the law were supposed to be submitted. It was of his own free will that he disregarded the various privileges which lay open to him; others in his place would have frequented the passages, hung about the yards, and grown familiar with the tap, where spirits were openly bought and sold. Money could do much in those days of lax discipline, and the man who could pay, and could give, need have very few wants unsatisfied. But Adam's only desire was to be left undisturbed and alone, and as this entailed no undue amount of trouble after their first curiosity had been satisfied, it was not thought necessary to deny him this privilege.

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From constantly going in and out, most of the officials inside the prison knew Eve, while to but very few was Adam's face familiar; and it was on this fact, aided by the knowledge that through favour of a gratuity friends were frequently permitted to outstay their usual hour, that most of their hopes rested. Each day she came, Eve brought some portion of the disguise which was to be adopted; and then having learnt from Reuben that the *Mary Jane* had arrived, and was lying at the wharf unloading, not knowing what better to do, they decided that she should go to Captain Triggs and ask him, in case



Adam could get away, whether he would let him come on board his vessel and give him shelter there below.

'Waal no,' said Triggs, 'I woan't do that, 'cos they as I'se got here might smell un out; but I'll tell 'ee what—I knaws a

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chap as has in many ways bin beholden to me fore now, and I reckon if I gives un the cue he'll do the job for 'ee.'

'But do you think he's to be trusted?' Eve asked.

'Waal, that rests on how small a part you'm fo'ced to tell un of,' said Triggs, 'and how much you makes it warth his while. I'm blamed if I'd go bail for un myself, but that won't be no odds 'gen' Adam's goin'; 'tis just the place for he. 'Tud niver do to car'y a pitch-pot down and set un in the midst o' they who couldn't bide his stink.'

'And the crew?' said Eve, wincing under Captain Triggs' figurative language.

'Awh, the crew's right enuf—a set o' gashly smudge-faced raskils that's near half Maltee and t'other Lascar Injuns. Anygaolbird that flies their way 'ull find they's all of a feather. But here, he added, puzzled by the event, 'how's this that you'm still mixed

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up with Adam so? I thought 'twas all 'long o' you and Reuben May that the *Lottery's* landin' got blowed about?'

Eve shook her head. 'Be sure,' she said, "'twas never in me to do Adam any harm.'

'And you'm goin' to stick to un now through thick and thin? 'Twill niver do for un, ye knaw, to set his foot on Cornish ground agen?'

'He knows that,' said Eve, 'and if he gets away, we shall be married and go across the seas to some new part, where no one can tell what brought us from our home.'

Triggs gave a significant nod. 'Lord!' he exclaimed, 'but that's a poor look-out for such a bowerly maid as you be. Wouldn't it be better for 'ee to stick by yer friends 'bout here than— —'

'I haven't got any friends,' interrupted

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Eve promptly, 'excepting it's Adam and Joan and Uncle Zebedee.'

'Ah, poor old Zebedee!' sighed Triggs; 'tis all dickey with he. The day I started I see Sammy Tucker to Fowey, and he was tellin' that th' ole chap was gone reg'lar tottlin' like, and can't tell thickee fra that; and as for Joan Hocken, he says you wouldn't know her for the same. And they's tooked poor foolish Jonathan, as is more mazed than iver, to live with 'em; and Mrs. Tucker, as used to haggle with everybody so, tends on 'em all hand and foot, and her's given up praichin' 'bout religion and that, and 's turned quite neighbourly, and, so long as her can save her daughter, thinks nothin's too hot nor too heavy.'

'Dear Joan!' sighed Eve; 'she's started by the coach on her way up here now.'

'Whether she hath or no!' exclaimed Triggs in surprise. 'Then take my word

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they's heerd that Jerrem's to be hanged, and Joan's comin' up to be all ready to hand for 't.'

'No, not that,' groaned Eve, for at the mere mention of the word the vague dread seemed to shape itself into a certainty. 'Oh, Captain Triggs, don't say that if Adam gets off you don't think Jerrem's life will be spared.'

'Wa-al, my poor maid, us must hope so,' said the compassionate captain; 'but 'tis the worst o' they doin's that sooner or later th' endin of 'em must come. 'Twould never do to let 'em prosper allays,' he added with impressive certainty, 'or where 'ud be the use o' parsons praichin' up 'bout heaven and hell? Why now, us likes good liquor cheap to Fowey, and wance 'pon a time us had it too; but that han't bin for twenty year. Our day's gone by, and so 'ull theirs be now; and th' excise 'ull come,

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and revenoos 'ull settle down, and folks be fo'ced to take to louserin' for the bit o' bread they ates, and live quiet and ppaceable, as good neighbours should. So try and take

heart, and if so be that Adam can give they Bailey chaps the go by, tell un to come longs here, and us 'ull be odds with any o' they that happens to be follerin' to his heels.' Charmed with this friendly promise, Eve said 'Good-bye,' leaving the captain puzzled with speculations on the female sex, and the many curious contradictions which seem to influence their actions; while the hour being now too late to return to the prison, she took her way to her own room, thinking it best to begin the preparations which in case of Adam's escape, and any sudden departure, it would be necessary to have completed. Perhaps it was her interview with Captain

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Triggs, the sight of the wharf and the ships, which took her thoughts back and made them bridge the gulf which divided her past life from her present self. Could the girl she saw in that shadowy past—headstrong, confident, impatient of suffering, and unsympathetic with sorrow—be this same Eve who walked along with all hope and thought of self merged in another's happiness and welfare? Where was the vanity, where the tricks and coquetries?—passports to that ideal existence after which in the old days she had so thirsted. Trampled out of sight, and choked beneath the fair blossoms of a higher life, which, as in many a human nature, had needed sorrow, humiliation, and a great watering of tears, before there could spring forth the flowers for a fruit which should one day ripen into great perfection.

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No wonder then that she should be shaken by a doubt of her own identity, and having reached her room, she paused upon the threshold and looked around as if to satisfy herself by all those silent witnesses which made it truth.

There was the chair in which she had so often sat, plying her needle with such tardy grace, while her impatient thoughts did battle with the humdrum narrow life she led.

How she had beat against the fate which seemed to promise naught but that dull round of commonplace events in which her early years had passed away! How as a gall and

fret had come the thought of Reuben's proffered love, because it shadowed forth the level of respectable routine, the life she then most dreaded!

To be courted and sought after: to call forth love, jealousy, and despair; to be

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looked up to, thought well of, praised, admired—these were the delights she had craved, and these the longings she had had granted. And a sigh from the depths of that chastened heart rendered the bitter tribute paid by all to satiated vanity and out-lived desire.

The dingy walls, the ill-assorted furniture (her mother's pride in which had sometimes vexed her, sometimes made her laugh), now looked like childhood's friends, whose faces stamp themselves upon our inmost hearts. The light no longer seemed obscure, the room no longer gloomy; for each thing in it now was flooded by the tender light of memory—that wondrous gift to man, which those who only sail along life's summer sea can never know in all the heights and depths revealed to storm-tossed hearts.

'What, you've come back!' a voice said

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in her ear, and looking round Eve saw it was Reuben, who had entered unperceived.

'There's nothing fresh gone wrong?' he asked.

'No, nothing;' but the sad smile she tried to give him welcome with was so akin to tears that Reuben's face assumed a look of doubt. "'Tis only that I'm thinking how I'm changed from what I was,' said Eve. 'Why, once I couldn't bear this room and all the things about it; but now, O Reuben! my heart seems like to break because—perhaps 'twill soon now come to saying good-bye to all of it for ever.'

Reuben winced. 'You're fixed to go, then?'

'Yes, where Adam goes I shall go too—don't you think I should? What else is left for me to do?'

'You feel then you'd be happy—off with him—away from all and—everybody else?'

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‘Happy! should I be happy to know he’d gone alone? happy to know I’d driven him away to some place where I wouldn’t go myself?’ and Eve paused, shaking her head before she added, ‘If he can make another start in life—try and begin again— —’

‘You ought to help him to it,’ said Reuben, promptly, ‘that’s very plain to see. O Eve! do you mind the times when you and me have talked of what we’d liketo do—how, never satisfied with what went on around, we wanted to be altogether such as some of those we’d heard and read about? The way seems almost opened up to you; but what shall I do when all this is over, and you are gone away? I can’t go back and stick to trade again, working for nothing more but putting victuals in myself.’

For a moment Eve did not speak; then,

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with a sudden movement, she turned, saying to Reuben:

‘There’s something that, before our lives are at any moment parted, I’ve wanted to say to you, Reuben. ’Tis that until now, this time while we’ve been altogether here, I’ve never known what your worth is—what you would be to any one who’d got the heart to value what you’d give. Of late it has often seemed that I should think but very small of one who’d had the chance of your liking, and yet didn’t know the proper value of such goodness.’

Reuben gave a look of disavowal, and Eve continued, adding with a little hesitation:

‘You mustn’t think it strange in me for saying this. I couldn’t tell you if you didn’t know how everything lies between Adam and myself; but ever since this trouble’s come about, all my thoughts

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seem changed, and people look quite different now to what they did before; and most of all, I’ve learnt to know the friend I’ve got, and always had, in you, Reuben.’

Reuben did not answer for a moment.

He seemed struggling to keep back something he was prompted to speak of.

'Eve,' he said at length, 'don't think that I've not made mistakes, and great ones, too. When first I fought to battle down my leaning towards you, why was it? Not because of doubting that 'twould ever be returned, but 'cos I held myself too good a chap in all my thoughts and ways to be taken up with such a butterfly concern as I took you to be. I'd never have believed then that you'd have acted as I've seen you act. I thought that love with you meant who could give you the finest clothes to wear, and let you rule the roast the easiest; but you have shown me that

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you are made of better woman's stuff than that. And, after all, a man thinks better of himself for mounting high than stooping to pick up what can be had for asking any day.'

'No, no, Reuben; your good opinion is more than I deserve,' said Eve, her memory stinging her with past recollections. 'If you want to see a dear, kind-hearted, unselfish girl, wait until Joan comes. I do so hope that you will take to her. I think you will, after what you've been to Jerrem and to Adam. I want you and Joan to like each other.'

'I don't think there's much fear of that,' said Reuben. 'Jerrem's spoke so freely about Joan, that I seem to know her before ever having seen her. Let me see, her mind was at one time set on Adam, wasn't it?

'I think that she was very fond of

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Adam,' said Eve, colouring; 'and so far as that goes, I don't know that there is any difference now. I'm sure she'd lay her life down if it would do him good.'

'Poor soul!' sighed Reuben, drawn by a friendly feeling to sympathise with Joan's unlucky love. 'Her cup's been full, and no mistake, of late.'

'Did Jerrem seem to feel it much that Uncle Zebedee 'd been took so strange?' asked Eve.

'I didn't tell him more than I could help,' said Reuben. 'As much as possible, I made it out to him that for the old man to come to London wouldn't be safe, and the fear of that seemed to pacify him at once.'

‘I haven’t spoken of it to Adam yet,’ said Eve. ‘He hasn’t asked about his coming, so I thought I’d leave the telling till another time. His mind seems set on

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nothing but getting off, and by it setting Jerrem free.’

But Reuben made no rejoinder to the questioning tone of Eve’s words, and after a few minutes’ pause he waived the subject by reverting to the description which Eve had given of Joan, so that, in case he had to meet her alone, he might recognise her without difficulty. Eve repeated the description, dwelling with loving preciseness on the various features and points by which Joan might be known; and then Reuben, having some work to do, got up to say good-bye.

‘Good-bye,’ said Eve, holding out her hand. ‘Good-bye. Every time I say it now I seem to wonder if ’tis to be goodbye indeed.’

‘Why, no; in any way you’d wait until the trial was over?’

‘Yes, I forgot. Of course we should.’

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‘Well, then, do you think I’d let you go without a word? Ah! Eve, no. Whatever others are, nobody’s yet pushed you from your place, nor never will so long as my life lasts.’

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## CHAPTER XII

At length the dreaded day was over, the trial was at an end, and, in spite of every effort made, Jerrem condemned to die. The hopes raised by the knowledge of Adam’s escape seemed crowned with success, when, to the court’s dismay, it was announced that the prisoner’s accuser could not be produced; he had mysteriously disappeared the evening before, and in spite of a most vigorous search was nowhere to be found. But with minds already resolved to make this hardened smuggler’s fate a warning and

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example to all such as should henceforth dare the law, one of the cutter's crew, wrought upon by the fear lest Jerrem should escape and baffle the vengeance they had vowed to take, was got to swear that Jerrem was the man who fired the fatal shot; and though it was shown that the night was dark and recognition next to impossible, this evidence was held conclusive to prove the crime, and nothing now remained but to condemn the culprit. The judge's words came slowly forth, making the stoutest there shrink back, and let that arrow from the bow of death glance by, and set its mark on him upon whose face the crowd now turned to gaze.

'Can it be that he is stunned? or is he hardened?'

For Jerrem stands all unmoved and calm; while, dulled by the sound of rushing waters, the words the judge has said come booming

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back and back again; a sickly tremor creeps through, every limb, and makes it nerveless; a sense of growing weight presses the flesh down as a burden on the fainting spirit; one instant a thousand faces, crowding close, keep out the air; the next, they have all receded out of sight back into misty space, and he is left alone, with all around faded and grown confused, and all beneath him slipping and giving way. Suddenly a sound rouses him back to life—a voice has smote his ear and cleaved his inmost soul; and lifting his head, his eyes are met by sight of Joan, who with a piercing shriek has fallen back death-like and pale in Reuben's out-stretched arms.

Then Jerrem knows that hope is past, and he must die, and in one flash his fate, in all its misery and shame, stands out before him, and reeling he totters, to sink down senseless, and be carried off to that dismal cell allotted to those condemned

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to death; while Reuben, as best he can, manages to get Joan out of court and into the open air, where she gradually comes back to life again, and is able to listen to such poor



comfort as Reuben's sad heart can find to give her. For by reason of those eventful circumstances, which serve to cement friendships by suddenly overthrowing the barriers Time must otherwise gradually wear away, Reuben May and Joan Hocken have (in the week which has intervened between her arrival and this day of trial) become more intimate and thoroughly acquainted than if in an ordinary way they had known each other for years.

A stranger in a large city, with not one familiar face to greet her, who does not know the terrible feeling of desolation which made poor Joan hurry through the crowded streets, shrinking away from their bustle and throng towards Reuben, the one person

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she had to turn to for sympathy, advice, assistance, and consolation? With that spirit of perfect trust which her own large heart gave her the certain assurance of receiving, Joan placed implicit reliance in all Reuben said and did; and seeing this, and receiving an inward satisfaction from the sight, Reuben involuntarily slipped into a familiarity of speech and manner very opposed to the stiff reserve he usually maintained towards strangers.

Ten days were given before the day on which Jerrem was to die, and during this time, through the various interests raised in his behalf, no restriction was put upon the intercourse between him and his friends; so that, abandoning everything for the poor soul's welfare, Reuben, Joan, and Jerrem spent hour after hour in the closest intercourse. Happily, in times of great extremity the power of realising our exact

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situation is mostly denied to us; and in the case of Joan and Jerrem, although surrounded by the terrors and within the outposts of that dreaded end, it was nothing unfrequent to hear a sudden peal of laughter, which often would have as sudden an end in a great burst of tears.

To point to hopes and joys beyond the grave when every thought is centred and fixed on this life's interests and keen anxieties, is but a fruitless vain endeavour; and Reuben had

to try and rest contented in the assurance of Jerrem's perfect forgiveness and goodwill to all who had shown him any malice or ill-feeling, to draw some satisfaction from the unselfish love he showed to Joan, and the deep gratitude he now expressed to Uncle Zebedee.

What would become of them? he often asked, when some word of Joan's revealed the altered aspect of their affairs; and then,

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overcome by the helplessness of their forlorn condition, he would entreat Reuben to stand by them, not to forget Joan, not to forsake her. And Reuben, strangely moved by sight of this poor giddy nature's overwrought emotion, would try to calm him with the ready assurance that while he lived Joan should never want a friend; and touched by his words, the two would clasp his hands together, telling each other of all the kindness he had showed them, praying God would pay him back in blessings for his goodness. Nor were theirs the only lips which spoke of gratitude to Reuben May; his name had now become familiar to many who through his means were kept from being ignorant of the sad fate which awaited their boon companion, their prime favourite, the once madcap, rollicking Jerrem; the last one, as Joan often told Reuben, whom any in Polperro would have

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fixed on for evil to pursue, or misfortune to overtake, and about whom all declared there must have been 'a hitch in the block somewheres, as Fate never intended that ill-luck should pitch upon Jerrem.' The repetition of their astonishment, their indignation, and their sympathy, afforded the poor fellow the most visible satisfaction, harassed as he was becoming by one dread which entirely swallowed up the thought and fear of death. This ghastly terror was the then usual consignment of a body after death to the surgeons for dissection, and the uncontrollable trepidation which would take possession of him each time this hideous recollection forced itself upon him, although unaccountable to Reuben, was most painful for him to witness. What difference could it make what

became of one's body after death? Reuben would ask himself, puzzled to fathom that wonderful

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tenderness which some natures feel for the flesh which embodies their attractions. But Jerrem had felt a passing love for his own dear body—vanity of it had been his ruling passion, its comeliness his great glory; so much so that even now a positive satisfaction would have been his, could he have pictured himself outstretched and lifeless, with lookers-on moved to compassion by the dead grace of his winsome face and slender limbs. Joan, too, was caught by the same infection. Not to lie whole and decent in one's coffin—oh, it was an indignity too terrible for contemplation! and every time they were away from Jerrem she would beset Reuben with entreaties and questions as to what could be done to avoid the catastrophe.

The one plan he knew of had been tried, and tried, too, with repeated success, and this was the engaging of a superior force

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to wrest the body from the surgeon's crew—a set of sturdy miscreants, with whom to do battle a considerable mob was needed; but with money grown very scarce and time so short, the thing could not be managed, and Reuben tried to tell Joan of its impossibility while they two were walking to a place in which it had been agreed they should find some one with a message from Eve, who, together with Adam, was in hiding on board the vessel Captain Triggs had spoken of. But instead of the messenger, Eve herself arrived, having ventured this much with the hope of hearing some thing that would lessen Adam's despair and grief at learning the fate of Jerrem.

'Ah, poor sawl!' sighed Joan, as Eve ended her dismal account of Adam's sad condition; 'tis only what I feared to hear of. But tell un, Eve, to lay it to his heart that Jerrem's forgived un every bit, and

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don't know what it is to hold a grudge to Adam; and if I speak of un, he says, "Why, doan't I know it ain't through he, but 'cos o' my own headstrong ways and they sneaks o' revenoo chaps," who falsely swore away his blessed life.'

'Does he seem to dread it much?' asked Eve; the sickly fears which filled her heart echoed in each whispered word.

'Not *that* he don't,' said Joan, lifting her hand significantly to her throat. "'Tis after. Oh, Eve!' she gasped, 'ain't it too awful to think of their cuttin' up his poor dead body into bits! Call theyselves doctors!' she burst out; 'the gashly lot! I'll never let wan o' their name come nighs't to me agen.'

'Oh, Reuben!' gasped Eve, 'is it so? Can nothing be done?'

Reuben shook his head.

'Nothing now,' said Joan; 'for want o'

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Money, too, mostly, Eve—and the guineas I've a-wasted! Oh, how the sight o' every one rises and chinks in judgment 'gainst my ears!

'If we'd got the money,' said Reuben, soothingly, 'there isn't time. All should be settled by to-morrow night, and if some one this minute brought the wherewithal, I haven't one 'pon whom I dare to lay my hand to ask to undertake the job.'

'Then 'tis no use harpin' 'pon it any more,' said Joan, while Eve gave a sigh concurring in what she said, both, of them knowing well that if Reuben gave it up, the thing must be hopeless indeed.

Here was another stab for Adam's wounded senses, and with a heavy heart and step Eve took her way back to him, while Reuben and Joan continued to thread the streets which took them by a circuitous road home to Knight's Passage.

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But no sooner had Eve told Adam of this fresh burden laid on poor Jerrem, than a new hope seemed to animate him. Something was still to be done! There yet remained an atonement which, though it cost him his life, he could strive to make to Jerrem.

Throwing aside the fear of detection which had hitherto kept him skulking within the little vessel, he set off that night to find the *Mary Jane*, and, reofardless of the terrible shame which had filled him at the bare thought of confronting Triggs or any of his crew, he cast himself upon their mercy, beseeching them as men, and Cornish men, to do this much for their brother-sailor in his sad need and last extremity; and his appeal and the nature of it had so touched these quickly-stirred hearts, that, forgetful of the contempt and scorn with which, in the light of an informer, they had hitherto viewed Adam,

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they had one and all sworn to aid him to their utmost strength, and to bring to the rescue certain others of whom they knew, by whose help and assistance success would be more probable.

Therefore it was that, two days before the morning of his sentenced death, Eve was able to put into Reuben's hand a scrap of paper, on which was written Adam's vow to Jerrem, that though his own life paid the forfeit for it, Jerrem's body should be rescued and saved.

Present as Jerrem's fears had been to Reuben's eyes and to his mind, until he saw the transport of agitated joy which this assurance gave to Jerrem, he had never grasped a tithe of the terrible dread which during the last few days had taken such complete hold of the poor fellow's inmost thoughts. Now, as he read again and again the words which Adam had written, a

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torrent of tears burst forth from his eyes in an ecstasy of relief he caught Joan to his heart, wrung Reuben's hand, and from that moment began to gradually compose himself into a state of greater ease and seeming tranquillity. Confident, through the unbroken trust of years, that Adam's promise, once given, might be implicitly relied on, Jerrem needed no further assurance than these few written words to satisfy him that every human effort would be made on his behalf; and the knowledge of this, and that old comrades would be near him, waiting to unite their strength for his rescue, was in itself a balm and consolation.

He grew quite loquacious about the crestfallen authorities, the surprise of the crowd, and the disappointment of the ruffianly mob deprived of their certain prey; while the two who listened sat with a tightening grip upon their hearts, for

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when these things should come to be, the life of him who spoke them would have passed away, and the immortal soul have flown from out that perishable husk on which his last vain thoughts were still being centred.

Poor Joan! The time had yet to come when she would spend herself with many a sad regret and sharp upbraiding that this and that had not been said and done; but now, her spirit swallowed up in desolation and sunk beneath the burden of despair, she sat all silent close by Jerrem's side, covering his hands with many a mute caress, yet never daring to lift up her eyes to look into his face without a burst of grief sweeping across to shake her like a reed.

Jerrem could eat and drink, but Joan's lips never tasted food. A fever seemed to burn within, and fill her with its restless torment; the beatings of her throbbing

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heart turned her first hot, then cold, as each pulse said the time to part was hurrying to its end.

By Jerrem's wish Joan was not told that, on the morning of his death, to Reuben alone admittance to him had been granted; therefore when the eve of that morrow came, and the time to say farewell actually arrived, the girl was spared the knowledge that this parting was more than the shadow of that last good-bye which so soon would have to be said for ever. Still the sudden change in Jerrem's face pierced her afresh, and broke down that last barrier of control over a grief she could subdue no longer. In vain the turnkeys warned them that time was up, and Joan must go. Reuben entreated too that they should say good-bye; the two but clung together in more desperate necessity, until Reuben, seeing that further force would be required,

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stepped forward, and stretching out his hand found it caught at by Jerrem, and held at once with Joan's, while in words, from which all strength of tone seemed to die away, Jerrem whispered, 'Reuben, if ever it could come to pass that when I'm gone, you and she might find it some day in your minds to stand together—*one*—say 'twas the thing he washed for most—before he went.' Then with a feeble effort to push her into Reuben's arms, he caught her back, and straining her close to his heart again, cried out, 'Oh Joan! but death comes bitter, when it means good-bye to such as you.' Another cry, a closer strain, then Jerrem's arms relax—his hold gives way, and Joan falls staggering back; the door is opened—shut; the struggle is past, and ere their sad voices can come echoing back, Jerrem and Joan have looked their last in life.

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### CHAPTER XIII

When Reuben found that to be a witness of Jerrem's death Joan must take her stand among the lawless mob who made holiday of such sad scenes as this, his decision was that the idea was untenable. Jerrem too had a strong desire that Joan should not see him die, and although his avoidance of anything that directly touched upon that dreaded moment had kept him from openly naming his wishes, the hints dropped satisfied

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Reuben that the knowledge of her absence would be a matter of relief to him. But how get Joan to listen to his scruples, when her whole mind was set on keeping by Jerrem's side until hope was past and life was over?

'Couldn't ee get her to take sommut that her wouldn't sleep off 'til 'twas late?' Jerrem had said, after Reuben had told him that the next morning he must come alone; and the suggestion made was seized on at once by Reuben, who, under pretence of getting something to steady her shaken nerves, procured from the apothecary near a simple

draught, which Joan in good faith swallowed. And then, Reuben having promised in case she fell asleep to awaken her at the appointed hour, the poor soul, worn out by sorrow and fatigue, threw herself down dressed as she was upon the bed, and soon was in a heavy sleep, from

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which she did not rouse until well into the following day, when some one moving in the room made her start up.

For a moment she seemed dazed, then rubbing her eyes as if to clear away those happy visions which had come to her in sleep, she gazed about until Reuben, who had at first drawn back, came forward to speak to her.

'Why, Reuben,' she cried, 'how's this? have I been dreamin' or what? The day light's come, and see—the sun!'

And here she stopped, her parched mouth half unclosed, as fears came crowding thick upon her mind, choking her further utterance. One look at Reuben's face had told the tale, and though she did not speak again, the ashen hue, that overspread and drove all colour from her cheeks, proclaimed to him that she had guessed the truth.

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''Twas best, my dear,' he said, 'that you should sleep while he went to his rest.'

But the unlooked-for shock had been too great a strain on body and mind, alike overtaxed and weak; and falling back, Joan lay for hours as one unconscious and devoid of life. And Reuben sat silent by her side, paying no heed as hour by hour went by, till night had come, and all around was dark; then some one came softly up the stairs and crept into the room, and Eve's whispered 'Reuben' broke the spell.

Yes, all had gone well. The body, rescued and safe, was now placed within a house near to the churchyard in which Eve's mother lay; there it was to be buried. And there, the next day, the commonplace event of one among many funerals being over, the four thus linked by fate were brought together, and Adam and Joan again stood face to face.



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Heightened by the disguise, which in order to avoid detection he was obliged to adopt, the alteration in Adam was so complete that Joan stood aghast before this seeming stranger, while a fresh smart came into Adam's open wounds as he gazed upon the changed face of the once comely Joan.

A terrible barrier such as, until felt, they had never dreaded, seemed to have sprung up to separate and divide these two. In voluntarily they shrank at each other's touch, and quailed beneath each other's gaze, while each turned with a feeling of relief to him and to her who now constituted their individual refuge and support.

Yes, strange as it seemed to Adam, and unaccountable to Joan, *she* clung to Reuben, *he* to Eve, before whom each could be natural and unrestrained, while between their present selves a great gulf had opened out.

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which naught but time or distance could bridge over.

So Adam went back to his hiding-place, Reuben to his shop, and Joan and Eve to the old home in Knight's Passage, as much lost amid the crowd of thronged London as if they had already taken refuge in that far-off land which had now become the goal of Adam's thoughts and keen desires. Eve too, fearing some fresh disaster, was equally anxious for their departure, and most of Reuben's spare time was swallowed up in making the necessary arrangements. A passage in his name for himself and his wife was secured in a ship about to start. At the last moment this passage was to be transferred to Adam and Eve, whose marriage would take place a day or two before the vessel sailed. The transactions on which the successful fulfilment of these various events depended were mostly

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conducted by Reuben, aided by the counsels of Mr. Osborne, and the assistance of Captain Triggs, whose good-fellowship, no longer withheld, made him a valuable coadjutor.

Fortunately Triggs' vessel, through some detention of its cargo, had remained in London for an unusually long time; and now when it did sail, Joan was to take passage in her back to Polperro.

'Awh, Reuben, my dear,' sighed Joanone evening, as Eve having gone to see Adam, the two walked out towards the little spot where Jerrem lay, and as they went discussed Joan's near departure, 'I wish to goodness you'd pack up yer alls and come 'longs to Polperro home with me; 'tud be ever so much better than stayin' to this gashly London, where there ain't a blow o' air that's fresh to draw your breath in.'

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'Why, nonsense!' said Reuben; 'you wouldn't have me if I'd come.'

'How not have 'ee?' exclaimed Joan.

'Why if so be, I thought you'd come, I'd never stir from where I be until I got the promise of it.'

'But there wouldn't be nothin' for me to do,' said Reuben.

'Why, iss, there would, oceans,' returned Joan. 'Laws, I knows clocks by scores as hasn't gone for twenty year and more. Us has got two ourselves that wan won't strike, and t'other you can't make tick.'

Reuben smiled, then growing more serious he said, 'But do you know, Joan, that yours isn't the first head it's entered into about going down home with you? I've had a mind towards it myself many times of late.'

'Why, then, do come to wance,' said Joan excitedly; 'for so long as they leaves me

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the house, there'll be a home with me and Uncle Zebedee, and I'll go bail for the welcome you'll get gived 'ee there.'

Reuben was silent, and Joan, attributing this to some hesitation over the plan, threw further weight into her argument by saying, 'There's the chapel too, Reuben; only to think o' the sight o' good you could do praichin' to 'em and that! for though it didn't

seem to make no odds before, I reckons there's not a few that wants, like me, to be told o' some place where they treats folks better than they does down here below.'

'Joan,' said Reuben, after a pause, speaking out of his own thoughts and paying no heed to the words she had been saying, 'you know all about Eve and me, don't you?'

Joan nodded her head.

'How I've felt about her, so that I

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believe the hold she's got on me no one on earth will ever push her off from.'

'Ah, poor sawl!' sighed Joan compassionately; 'I've often had a feelin' for what you'd to bear, and for this reason too, that I knaws myself what 'tis to be ousted from the heart you'm cravin' to call yer own.'

'Why, yes, of course, ' said Reuben briskly; 'you were set down for Roger once, wern't set you?'

'Ah, and there's they to Polperro, mother amongst 'em too, who'll tell 'ee now, that if Eve had never showed her face inside the place, Adam 'ud ha' had me after all. But there, all that's past and gone long ago.'

There was another pause, which Reuben broke by saying suddenly, 'Joan, should you take it very out of place if I was to ask you whether after a bit you could

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marry me? I daresay now such a thought never entered your head before.'

'Well, iss it has,' said Joan; 'and o' late, ever since that blessed dear spoke they words he did, I've often fell to wonderin' if so be 'tud ever come to pass. Not, mind, that I should ha' bin put out if t' had so happened that you'd never axed me like, but still I thought sometimes as how you might; and then agen I says, "Why should he, though?" '

'There's many a reason why I should ask *you*, Joan,' said Reuben, smiling at her unconscious frankness, 'though very few why you should consent to take a man whose love another woman has flung away.'

‘Awh, so far as that goes, the both of us is takin’ what’s another’s orts, you know,’ smiled Joan.

‘Then is it agreed?’ asked Reuben, stretching out his hand.

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‘Iss, so far as I goes ’tis, with all my heart.’ Then, as she took his hand a change came to her April face, and looking at him through her swimming eyes she said, ‘And very grateful too, I’m to ’ee, Reuben, for I don’t know by neither another wan who’d take up with a poor heart-broke maid like me, and they she’s looked to all her life disgraced by others and theysselves.’

Reuben pressed the hand that Joan had given to him, and drawing it through his arm, the two walked on in silence, pondering over the unlooked-for ending to the strange events they both had lately passed through. Joan’s heart was full of a contentment which made her think, ‘How pleased Adam will be, and won’t mother be glad! and Uncle Zebedee ’ull have somebody to look to now, and keep poor Jonathan straight, and put things a bit in

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order.’ While Reuben, bewildered by the thoughts which crowded to his mind, seemed unable to disentangle them. Could it be possible that he, Reuben May, was going down to live at Polperro—a place whose very name he had once taught himself to abominate? That he could be willingly casting his lot amid a people whom he had but lately branded as thieves, outcasts, reprobates? Involuntarily his eyes turned towards Joan, and a nimbus in which perfect charity was intertwined with great love and singleness of heart seemed to float about her head and shed its radiance on her face, and its sight was to Reuben as the first touch of love, for he was smitten with a sense of his own unworthiness, and though he did not speak he asked that a like spirit to that which filled Joan might rest upon himself.

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That evening Eve was told the news which Joan and Reuben had to tell; and as she listened, the mixed emotions which swelled within her perplexed her not alittle, for even while feeling that the two wishes she most desired—Joan cared for and Reuben made happy—were thus fulfilled, her heart seemed weighted with a fresh disaster—another wrench had come to part her from that life soon to be nothing but a lesson and a memory. And Adam, when he was told, although the words he said were honest words and true, and truly he did rejoice, there yet within him lay a sadness born of regret at rendering up that love so freely given to him, now to be garnered for another's use; and henceforth every word that Reuben spoke, each promise that he gave—though all drawn forth by Adam's own requests—stuck everyone a separate thorn within his heart,

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sore with the thought of being an outcast from the birthplace that he loved, and cut off from those whose faces now he yearned to look upon.

No vision opened up to Adam's view the prosperous life the future held in store. No still small voice then whispered in his ear that out of this sorrow was to come the grace which made success sit well on him, and Eve; and though as years went by, and intercourse became more rare, their now keen interest in Polperro and its people was swallowed up amid the many claims a busy life laid on them both, each noble action done—each good deed wrought by Adam, and by Eve too, bore on it the unseen impress of that sore chastening through which they now were passing.

Out of the savings which from time to time Adam had placed with Mr.Macey enough was found to pay the passage-

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money out, and keep them from being pushed by any pressing want on landing.

Already, at the nearest church, Adam and Eve had been married, and nothing now remained but to get on board the vessel, which had already dropped down the river, and was to sail the following morning.

Triggs had volunteered to put them and their possessions safely on board, and Reuben and Joan, with Eve's small personal belongings, were to meet them at the steps, close by which the *Mary Jane's* boat would be found waiting. The time had come when Adam could lay aside his disguise, and appear in much the same trim he usually did when at Polperro.

Joan was the first to spy him drawing near, and holding out both her hands to greet the welcome change, she cried,

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'Thank the Lord for lettin' me see un his own self wance more. Awh, Adam! awh, my dear! 't seems as if I could spake to 'ee now, and know 'ee for the same agen. Look to un, Reuben; you don't wonder now what made us all so proud of un at at home.'

Reuben smiled, but Adam shook his head—the desolation of this sad farewell robbed him of every other power but that of draining to the dregs its bitterness. During the whole of that long day Eve and he had hardly said one word, each racked with thoughts to which no speech gave utterance. Mechanically each asked about the things the other one had brought, and seemed to find relief in feigning much anxiety about their safety, until Triggs, fearing they might outstay their time, gave them a hint it would not do to linger long; and, with a view to their leave-taking being

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unconstrained, he volunteered to take the few remaining things down to the boat, and stow them safely away, adding that when they heard his whistle given it would be the signal that they must start without delay.

The spot they had fixed on for the starting-place was one but little used, and well removed from all the bustle of a more frequented landing. A waterman lounged here and there, but seeing the party was another's fare, vouchsafed to them no further interest. The ragged mud-imps stayed their noisy pranks to scrutinise the country build of Triggs' boat, leaving the four, unnoticed, to stand apart and see each in the other's face the reflection of that misery which filled his own.

Parting for ever! no hopes, no expectations, no looking forward, nothing to whisper, 'We shall meet again.' 'Good-bye

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for ever' was written on each face and echoed in each heart. Words could not soothe that suffering which turned this common sorrow into an individual torture, which each must bear unaided and alone; and so they stood silent, and with outward calm, knowing that on that brink of woe the quiver of an eye might overthrow their all but lost control.

The sun was sinking fast; the gathering mists of eventide were rising to shadow all around; the toil of day was drawing to its close; labour was past; repose was near at hand; its spirit seemed to hover around and breathe its calm upon those worn, tried souls. Suddenly a shrill whistle sounds upon their ears, and breaks the spell; the women start, and throw their arms around each other's necks. Adam stretches his hand out, and Reuben grasps it in his own.

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'Reuben, good-bye. God deal with you as you shall deal with those you're going among.'

'Adam, be true to her, and I'll be true to those you leave behind.'

'Joan,' and Roger's voice sounds hard and strained, and then a choking conies into his throat, and though he wants to tell her what he feels, to ask her to forgive all he has made her suffer, he cannot speak a word. Vainly he strives, but not a sound will come; and these two, whose lives, so grown together, are now to be rent asunder, stand stricken and dumb, looking from out their eyes that last farewell which their poor quivering lips refuse to utter.

'God bless and keep you, Eve,' Reuben's voice is sayins, as, taking her hands within his own, he holds them to his heart, and for a moment lets them rest there. 'Oh,

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friends,' he says, 'there is a land where partings never come; upon that shore may we four meet again!'

Then for a moment all their hands are clasped and held as in a vice, and then they turn, and two are gone and two are left behind.

And now the two on land stand with their eyes strained on the boat, which slowly fades away into the vapoury mist which lies beyond; then Reuben turns and takes Joan by the hand, and silently the two go back together, while Adam and Eve draw near the ship which is to take them to that far-off shore to which Hope's torch, rekindled, now is pointing.

'Good-bye' is said to Triggs, the boat pushes off, and the two, left standing side by side, watch it away until it seems a speck which suddenly is swallowed up and disappears from sight. Then Adam puts

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his arm round Eve, and as they draw closer together, from out their lips come sighing forth the whispered words—'Farewell, Farewell.'

THE END.