

BLACK JACK.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

"Eyah," sez I, "O'Hara's a devil and I'm not for denyin' it, but is he the only man in the wurruld? Let him go. He'll get tired av findin' our kit foul an' our treutments onn'p'rly kep'."

or another; an' my faith, they was few that was not so dishtinguisht. 'Twas all in the way av fair fight, though, for niver did I raise my hand exsept whin they had provoked me to ut.

was a kyartbridge gone from my pouch an' lyin' snug in my rifle. I was hot wid rage against them all, and worried the bullet out wid my teeth as fast as I cud, the room bein' empty. Then I tuk my boot an' the clavin'-rod and knocked out the pin av the fallin'-block. Oh, 'twas musle when that pin rowled on the flure! I put ut into my pouch an' struck a dab of dirt on the holes in the plate, puttin' the fallin'-block back. 'That'll do your business, Vulmea,' sez I, lyin' easy on the cot. 'Come an' sit on my chest the whole room av you, an' I will take you to my bosom for the biggest divils that iver cheated halter. I wud have no mercy on Vulmea. His or his life—little I cared.

an' showed his teeth to the gum. Then he spat on the flure. 'You're not worth ut,' sez he. 'Light that lamp, ye dogs,' an' wid that he turned away, an' I saw him walkin' off wid Slimmy's wife; she thryin' to wipe off the powther-black off the front av his jacket wid her handkerchief. 'A brave man you are,' thinks I—'a brave man an' a bad woman.'

sprung forward with a lighter step. The three musketeers had vanished into the night. L'ENVOI. And they were stronger hands than mine That digged the Ruby from the earth— More cunning brains that made it worth The large desire of a King; And bolder hearts that through the brine Went down the Perfect Pearl to bring.

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