

# **THE SPANISH WINE**

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The Spanish Wine by Frank Mathew

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**FRANK MATHEW**

**THE  
SPANISH WINE**



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SPANISH WINE

BY  
JAMES <sup>oc</sup>  
FRANK ~~MATHEW~~



JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD  
LONDON AND NEW YORK

1898  
HR

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*Audensm 14 Jan. 1924*





# The Spanish Wine

## CHAPTER I

### WHILE THE BELL TOLLED

"THE bell is tolling for me," said Dunluce, as he looked down at his wife.

"A wasted warning, my lord," said the monk, seated in the nook of the window, with the dwarf at his side, and listening to the tramp of the sentries along the ramparts beneath, and the bell tolling among the lines of besiegers.

"In such a time, the loudest warnings are wasted," said Dunluce, without turning, as he stood leaning his left elbow on the ponderous mantelpiece. "I can hold the Castle three days at the most — unless the ships come from England."

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"I have watched for them till my eyes are worn out," said his wife, as she faced them in her great chair between the table and hearth and kept her eyes on the logs. "I thought I could see the glimmering of the sails in the moonlight. Then the bell tolled, and woke me out of my dream."

The firelight was on her lofty and cold face and the tapestry circling the room with ghostly and fantastical figures that wavered, for a wind had begun, and all the house echoed the passionate inarticulate sea.

Dunluce had the air of a giant in the irresolute twilight that reddened his breastplate and the hilt of his sword.

"So they toll for Downpatrick: I am sorry he is gone," said he. "Watchful callous Downpatrick, with his effeminate ways!"

"I always liked him," his wife said, as she bent forward and held her hands to the fire and it was bright on her rings. In her black

## While the Bell Tolled

dress with the lace about her neck and her wrists, she appeared old, for there was grey in her hair.

"Too much, I used to think in old times. But that is long ago now: I have hardly an old enemy left. I don't know what has come over me," he went on, with a shudder. "I feel as if I was doomed."

His wife winced, as he spoke; and she leant back in her chair, clasping her thin hands on her lap.

"Come, sir," said he quickly, as if he tried to be cheerful, as he turned to the right and faced the monk and the dwarf, who were watching him in the dusk of the window. "Where have they put that wonderful wine of yours?"

"The wine?" said the monk. "It is over there on the sideboard."

"It will do us all the good in the world," said Dunluce, as he went over to fetch it.

"I believe it would," said the monk.