JOHN BURT

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CHAPTER TWO—Continued.

Prince growled. John looked up the road.

"There's someone coming," he said. Jessie turned and saw Miss Maldon approaching. She looked at her muddy feet, her bedraggled hat and her splattered blouse and skirt.

"I'll get an awful scolding," she said, half to herself and half to the boy. Then for the first time she scrutinized John Burt. She noted that he was fresh-faced, that he was not barefooted, like most farmer boys, and that he was handsome and self-possessed.

"Do you belong to the riffraff?" asked Jessie, lowering her voice so that the approaching governess should not hear her.

"Never heard of it," replied John Burt in a puzzled smile. "What is it?"

"I don't know," said Jessie; "but my papa spoke of it to his associates with the riffraff, and I forgot until just now to ask you if you are a riffraff."

A look of pain came to the honest face of the boy. Before he could speak Jessie turned to meet Miss Maldon.

"Why, Jessie Carden, what have you been doing?" With a cry of disgust she surveyed the girl's soiled clothes and surveyed the wreck of the sailor suit.

Jessie looked penitent indeed as she gazed at the muddy shoes and the torn stocking; but contrition is a feeble flame in the heart of a child.

"Never mind the old clothes, dear," said the governess