**CHAPTER XIII (13)**

**Mr. Mervel spikks o his Resignation**

Fin the gloamin wis gaitherin an Iping wis jist stertin tae keek fearie-like furth again on the brukken wrack o its Bank Holiday, a wee birkie in a bumshayvelt silk hat wis merchin painfu ben the gloamin ahin the beechwids on the road tae Brummlehurst. He cairried three buiks bun thegether bi some kinno fantoosh streetchy ferlie, an a bunnle rowed in a blae brod-cloot. His reid face shawed worry an fooner; he luikit tae be in a fitfu kinno hash. He wis jyned bi a voyce ither than his ain, an iver an again he joukit unner the touch o unseen hauns.

"Gin ye jink me again," quo the Voyce, "gin ye ettle tae jink me again --"

"Michty!" reponed Mr. Mervel. "Thon shouder's a heeze o hurts as it is."

"On ma honour," quo the Voyce, "I’ll kill ye."

"I didnae ettle tae jink ye," reponed Mervel, in a voyce that wisnae far awa frae greetin. "I sweir I didnae. I didnae ken the dashed turnin, thon wis aa! Foo the deil wis I tae ken the dashed turnin? As it is, I've bin duntit aboot--"

"Ye'll get duntit aboot a rowth mair gin ye dinna mind," spakk the Voyce, an Mr. Mervel smert becam seelent. He blew oot his chikks, an his een wir fu o wae.

"It's coorse eneuch tae lat thon tcyauvin fermfowk explode ma wee secret, wioot ye rinnin aff wi ma buik! Here am I ... Naebody kent I wis inveesible! An noo fit am I tae dae?"

"Fit am I tae dae?" fuspered Mervel.

"It's aa aboot ye. It’ll be in the papers! Aabody will be luikin fur me; aabody on their guaird--" The Voyce brukk aff intae strang curses an stoppit.

The wae o Mr. Mervel's face deepened, an his wauk slawed.

"Gae on!" quo the Voyce.

Mr. Mervel's face tuik on a blae-like tint atween the reidder swatches.

"Dinna drap thon buiks, gype," spakk the Voyce, sherply—owertakkin him.

"The fack is," quo the Voyce, "I’ll hae tae makk eese o ye… Yer a puir tool, bit I maun."

"I'm a dweeble tool," reponed Mervel.

"Ye are," spakk the Voyce.

"I'm the wirst o aa the tools ye could hae," quo Mervel. "I'm nae strang," he telt him efter a dishairtenin seelence. "I'm nae ower strang," he repeatit.

"Na?"

"An ma hairt's dweeble. Thon wee maitter--I pulled it throwe, of coorse--bit ma certes! I could hae drapped."

"Weel?"

"I hinnae the smeddum an virr fur the kinno thing ye wint."

"I'll gie ye virr."

"I wish ye widnae. I widnae like tae makk a soss o yer plans ye ken. But I micht--ooto ootricht fleg an wae."

"Ye’d better nae," quo the Voyce, wi quaet wecht.

"I wish I wis deid," spakk Mervel. "It’s nae justice," quo he; "ye maun admit.... It seems tae me I've the perfeck richt--"

"Hash on !" spakk the Voyce.

Mr. Mervel kittled up, an fur a time they gaed in seelence again.

"It's deevilish hard," quo Mr. Mervel. This wis eeseless. He tried anither ploy. "Fit dae I get ooto it?" he stertit again in a tone o untholeable wrang.

"Och! Be quaet,’spakk the Voyce, wi sudden bumbazin virr. "I'll see tae ye aa richt. Ye dae fit yer telt. Ye'll dae it aa richt. Yer a gype an aa thon, bit ye'll dae--"

"I tell ye, sir, I'm nae the cheil fur it. Respeckfu like—bit thon’s a fack

"Gin ye dinna be quaet I’ll thraw yer wrist again," quo the Inveesible Cheil. "I wint tae think."

Sune twa puils o yalla licht keekit ben the trees, an the squar touer o a kirk glowered throwe the gloamin. "I’ll keep ma haun on yer shouder," spakk the Voyce, "aa ben the clachan. Gae straicht ben an try nae pliskies. It’ll be the waur fur ye gin ye dae."

"I ken thon," maened Mr. Mervel, "I ken aa thon."

The waesome-luikin body in the auld farrant bumshayvelt silk hat gaed by the street o the wee clachan wi his bunnles, an vanished inno the gaitherin mirk ayont the lichts o the windaes.