Tony and Hastings  
HASTINGS. My honest 'squire! I now find you a man of your word.   
This looks like friendship.  
  
TONY. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world,  
if you knew but all. This riding by night, by the bye, is cursedly  
tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.  
  
HASTINGS. But how? where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are  
they in safety? Are they housed?  
  
TONY. Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad  
driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: rabbit me, but I'd rather  
ride forty miles after a fox than ten with such varment.  
  
HASTINGS. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with  
impatience.  
  
TONY. Left them! Why where should I leave them but where I found  
them?  
  
HASTINGS. This is a riddle.  
  
TONY. Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house, and  
round the house, and never touches the house?  
  
HASTINGS. I'm still astray.  
  
TONY. Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo,  
there's not a pond or a slough within five miles of the place but they  
can tell the taste of.  
  
HASTINGS. Ha! ha! ha! I understand: you took them in a round, while  
they supposed themselves going forward, and so you have at last brought  
them home again.  
  
TONY. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed Lane, where  
we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of  
Up-and-down Hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree  
Heath; and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in  
the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.  
  
HASTINGS. But no accident, I hope?  
  
TONY. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks  
herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey; and the cattle can  
scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with  
cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow  
you.  
  
HASTINGS. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?  
  
TONY. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'squire. Just now, it was all  
idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn YOUR way of fighting, I  
say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be  
friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be  
dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.  
  
HASTINGS. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss  
Neville: if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of  
the young one. [Exit HASTINGS.]  
  
TONY. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. She's got from the  
pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.