

would slay his arch enemy, the man who had carried off his betrothed, but who was now at his mercy. Ah, revenge is sweet! How he longed even now to hack that body to pieces, and send the head as a challenge to the village. But no—the word of a Christian is sacred. He had said and he must do it. If they brought him his betrothed for whom he had waited and planned and dreamed for eight long months, then he would release his enemy, but he would not forgive him. God give Hassan Agha into his hands again, and then he will give no quarter.

Ah, here they come. What? Ten of them? Ten women, in Turkish garb, of course. Their faces are covered. Which one is his betrothed? He cannot see her face. Will she be changed? Very much, no doubt. Once she was young and pretty and plump, but now—God only knows. But why are there ten of them? There is only one boy with them, the young lad whom they had released that day. Should he not go down and be the first to meet his betrothed, to lift the veil from her face and tell her she is now among friends? No, he would see her in good time. Now he must stay where he can order his men in case of an emergency. He must be safe from danger in case the Turks should really turn out to be playing a trick, for if he were shot their expedition would be doomed, and his betrothed would not be released, and his enemy would escape. But why are there ten women? The young lad is unarmed, that at least is well.

Slowly the group of ten women, dressed in long black robes, with their faces veiled and their heads sunk forward on their breasts, clambered up the steep narrow path that led to the trysting tree. The young lad behind urged them on with long curses. By the tree stood one of the Armenians, the mask still upon his face, a gun over his shoulder, but a revolver in his hand. As they drew near the Turkish lad bade the women stop, and then he approached the Armenian.

"Where are the prisoners you hold? Here I have come as you told me, and with me have come not five but ten Armenian women who were in our village. Only let my father free and the others also, I beseech you, for these ten women are in your hands."

"Back, you cur," was the answer, as a revolver was raised to the boy's head. "It is not for you to make the terms. When these women have safely reached the camp your friends will be set free."

"What surety have I that you speak the truth?" urged the lad.

"The word of a Christian, you Moslem dog," answered the other, "and if that is not enough, it is all you'll get." And again the revolver threatened and the lad sprang back.

"At least tell me how far away the camp is, that I may know how long I must wait. For I dare not go back alone, or else they will kill me. If you do not keep your word I must hide myself, I will be lost. Let my friends come soon."

"They'll come as soon as they can. The camp is on that peak where you see two trees against the sky. It's less than half an hour from here. You may be