

stood waiting. Half an hour, an hour passed, and still she remained there, her eyes fixed on the dark blue of mountains to the north, whence led the track passing the gate at which she stood.

There it was at last, that for which she had been waiting, the far-away glimmer of a lantern, dancing will-o'-the-wisp like down the mountain-side. Slowly, very slowly, it approached: the faint hum of voices was heard; then the clatter of heavy footsteps on the stony path. Ruth stood motionless, watching; then, suddenly flinging open the gate, she rushed headlong down the road, the light growing stronger, the voices louder as she ran.

"Wer da," she heard, "damn you, will you answer?" A ominous click followed.

"Don't shoot, it's I, Ruth Clayton," she screamed. "Is that you, Carl? Oh, for the love of God, tell me what has happened?"

There was a whispered consultation.

"It's only Carl's woman," she heard. "We can go on."

"Carl, why don't you answer?"

The footsteps came on. A rough bearded face was thrust into hers, the light of the lantern raised aloft falling full upon it. It was not Carl she saw, but a stranger.

"Oh, tell me please, please tell me, where is Carl Vanderbyl?"

"He's dead."

"Dead . . . dead."

"Died half an hour ago, the British commander shot him. He's dead too, or soon will be. There he lies, blast him, in that litter there."

"But I—I don't understand. Carl . . . promised . . ."

The man stared. "I don't know what you mean," he said, "and I'm not going to stop here explaining. I am hurt too. He," jerking his head towards the litter, "shot me as well. You be off back to the farm. Tell the tante