"Let us have another tune," — them to retort the trick on — "and I'll play something after his own fashion."

"This is a fair revenge enough, and I'll not balk you. Now, then, for your plan."

Various details were discussed, and it was settled that on that day-week Somers was again to communicate with me. He then took leave.

At the appointed time Somers returned, and appeared to be in high but flighty spirits. Every thing went, he said, arranged, and success all but certain. His scheme was then canvassed and finally accepted, and he again left the vessel.

The arrangement for the surprise and capture of Coequerel was this:—That notorious smuggler intended running a large cargo on the coast of Dorsetshire, on the north of Portland, at a place where the cliffs are high, precipitous, and sheer, and at that time very insufficiently watched by the shore force. Near the spot selected is or was a kind of cavern worn by the action of the sea in the chalky stratum, which at neap tides was partially dry, and at the time of our enterprise would effectually conceal a boat from the observation of any one who did not actually peer indirectly at its mouth. Coequerel was to leave Guernsey the next day in a large boat, with two lug-sails, but chiefly depending for speed upon its sweeps. It was calculated that he would reach his destined on about midnight. Somers had undertaken the duty of shore-signalman, and if danger were apprehended, was to warn the smugglers that hawks were abroad by burning a blue-light. The manner of running the cargo was to be this:—Some oars was provided with a windlass and sufficient length of rope, with a kind of rope-cradle at the end of it, in which a man could sit, on a couple of oars being slung, to reach the boat. The windlass he was to secure firmly at the edge of the cliff, and two or three of the men having been drawn up, other windlasses were to be fixed, by means of which it was calculated that in about half an hour the entire cargo would be safely carried off by the carts which Somers had undertaken to have ready on the spot. The signal for our appearance on the scene of action, the positive old man persisted, should be that agreed upon for the warning of the smugglers—the sudden ignition of a blue light. This did not seem the cleverest possible mode of procedure; but as the cavern in which we were to conceal ourselves was but a few yards northward of the spot marked out for the landing, and Somers promised he would only give the signal when the smugglers were in full work, I had little fear that, if other accidents did not capsize our scheme, they would be able to escape us.

The next afternoon the largest boat belonging to the *Hose* was fully manned; and leaving the cutter quietly at anchor in the Southampton river just above Calshot, we pulled with the tide—for there was but a light air, and that favorable for the smugglers, not for us—to our hiding-place, which we reached about eight o'clock in the evening.

The hours crept very slowly and dismally away, amid the darkness hoarse echoes and moanings of the cavern, into which the sea and wind, which were gradually rising, dashed and howled with much and increasing violence. Occasionally peeps at my watch, by the light of a lantern carefully shaded seaward, warned us that ten, eleven, twelve, one o'clock had passed, without bringing the friends we so anxiously expected, and fears of ultimate disappointment were chilling us far more than the cold night-breeze, when a man in the bow of the boat said in a whisper that he could hear the dash of oars.

We all instantly listened with eager attention, but it was not till we had bro't the boat to the entrance of the opening that the man's assertion was verified. There it was clear enough; and the near approach of a large boat, with the regular jerk of the oars or sweeps, was distinctly audible. The loud, clear hail of their shore signalman, answered by the "All right" of the smugglers, left no doubt that the expected prey was within our grasp; and I had a mind to pounce upon them at once, but was withheld by a promise which I had been obliged several times to repeat, that I would not under any circumstances do so till the signal flame sent a light over the waters.

As soon as the noise and bustle of laying in the sweeps, lowering the sails, and unstepping the masts, had subsided, we heard Somers hail the boat, and insist that the captain should come up before any of the others, as there was a difficulty about the carts which he alone could settle. The reply was a growl of assent, and we could hear by the clink of the check to the cog wheel of the windlass that Somers was paying out the rope. Presently Coequerel was heard to get into the cradle I have spoken of, to which a line was fastened in order to steady his ascent from below. The order was given to turn away, and the renewed click, click, announced that he was ascending the face of the cliff. I could hardly comprehend this manœuvre, which seemed to indicate the escape of the man we were the most anxious to secure, and the order to shove off was just on my lips when a powerful blue-light flamed suddenly forth, accompanied by a fierce but indistinct shout, or roar rather from Somers. The men replied by a loud cheer, and we shot smartly out; but having to avoid a line of reef, to row in a straight direction for about a cable's length, the smugglers, panic-stricken and bewildered as they were, had time to get way upon their lugger, and were plying their sweeps with desperate energy before the revenue-boat was fairly turned in direct pursuit. The frantic effort to escape was vain, and so was the still more frantic effort at resistance offered when we ran alongside. We did not hurt them much; one or two were knocked down by the sailors, brass-butted pistols; and after being secured, they had leisure to vent their rage in polyglot curses, part French, part English, and part Guernsey *patois*, and I to look round and see what had become of Coequerel.

The blue light still shed a livid radiance all around, and to my inexpressible horror and dismay I saw that the unfortunate man was suspended in the rope cradle, within about a cable's length of the brow of the cliff upon which Somers was standing and gazing at his victim with looks of demoniac rage and triumph. The deadly trap contrived by the inexorable old man was instantly apparent and to Coequerel's frenzied screams for help I replied by shouting to him to cut himself loose at once, as the only chance, for the barrel of a pistol gleamed distinctly in the hands of Somers.

"Lieutenant Warneford," cried the exulting maniac—he was nothing less—"I have caught this Coequerel nicely for you—got him swinging here in the prettiest cradle he was ever rocked in in his life—Ha! ha! ha!

"Cut loose at once!" I again shouted; and the man, as terribly impressed as myself, with the horror of the wretched man's position, swept the boat steadily towards the spot. "Somers, if you shoot that man you shall die on the gallows."

"Cut himself loose, do you say, Lieutenant?" screamed Somers, heedless of my last observation. "He can't; he has no knife—ha! ha! ha! And if he had, the pistol would be swifter than that; but I'll cut him loose presently, never fear. Look down, Jacques Coequerel," he continued laying himself flat down on the cliff, and stretching his right arm over it till the mouth of his pistol was within a yard or Coequerel's head, "this contains payment in full for your kindness to Ally Somers — more than I could in no other manner compass, I fear."

At this moment the blue light suddenly expired, and we were enveloped in what by contrast was total darkness. My recollections, however, hear the unmanly curses, and frantic cries of the merciless Somers, and moaning prayers for mercy, and after a while, when the moon, which had been obscured by heavy clouds, began to struggle