

I directed my steps to the gate of Redpost Park, and soon found myself wandering over the path now so well known to me. The sun, a great blinding ball of fire, was sinking slowly behind Redpost Park, and through the tall trees came red glimpses of flame which pained my eyes and blurred my vision.

As I passed the spot where my life had so nearly been sacrificed, where Madame Viacava had paid the great penalty, a brief pang of horror and dread shot through me. With quickening steps I left the scene of deadly peril behind, and was soon standing in the hall of Redpost Park, clasping with a fervent pressure the hand of the old man whose face I could not gaze at now without a feeling of revulsion.

Mr. Brabazon, I learned, was worse. His wound had not at first presented any symptoms of a serious nature. The bullet had not lodged in his wrist, and Mr. Ashcroft had hoped and believed he would have been able, without aid from outside, to bring his master round. But since the night of my adventure in the park Mr. Brabazon's wound had assumed a more dangerous aspect. He had been in great pain, attended with pronounced feverish symptoms. All this I learned as Mr. Ashcroft and I slowly ascended the stairs.

We reached the landing on the third floor, and entered a room which I had not previously been inside of. A lamp—the same lamp which had first sent its light into my study, alarming and horrifying me—stood on a bracket in a corner, and suffused the room with a sickly yellow glow,