

one who would have done this maiden grievous wrong. He followed us. Not an hour gone he overtook us with his knaves. He set them on to seize this woman hanging back himself. Old as I am I slew them both and got my death in it," and he touched the great wound in his side with the hilt of the broken sword. "Our horses were the better; we fled across the swamp for Blythburgh, he hunting us and seeking my life and her honour. Thus we found you as it was appointed."

Murgh turned his eyes. Following their glance for the first time they saw Hugh de Cressi and near him Grey Dick labouring at the grave. Eve stretched out her arms and so stood with head thrown back, the light of the daybreak shining in her lovely eyes and on her outspread hair. Hugh opened his lips to speak, but Murgh lifted his hand and pointed behind them.

They turned and there, not twenty paces from them, clad in armour and seated on a horse was Edmund Acour, Count de Noyon, Seigneur of Catrina.

He saw, then wheeled round to fly.

"Archer, to your work!" said Murgh, "you know it."

Ere the words had left his lips the great black bow was bent and ere the echoes died away the horse, struck in its stride by the keen arrow, sank dying to the ground.

Then Murgh beckoned to the rider and he came a man who must. But, throwing down the bow, Grey Dick once more began to labour at the grave like one who takes no further heed of aught save his allotted task.

Acour stood before Murgh like a criminal before his judge.

"Man," said the awful figure addressing him, "where have you been and what have you done since last we spoke together in the midday dark at Venice?"

Now, dragged word by slow word from his unwilling lips, came the answer of the traitor's heart.

"I fled from the field at Venice because I feared