

"Cheer up," he added, seeing Denham cover his face with his hands with a gesture of despair, "we'll be to hum spry 'nough, and my old woman 'll take care of Ella here while we go and look for t'other teu."

Ichabod's clearing lay a little way to the north side of the beaver-meadow and its belt of forest. And having awoke his wife Priscilla,—commonly called Cilly Clapshaw, a name whose libellous sound was by no means in accordance with the dame's shrewd character,—he consigned Ella to her care, and started out again with Denham, a long lad of his, called Job, and a farm 'help,' to look for the missing ones. They took with them lanterns, and a couple of guns, in consideration of the company they might possibly fall in with on their way, and for hours they searched the woods in all directions in the hope of finding her, but all with no avail.

The morning broke at last,—a black, cold day; the same keen, cutting wind still blew over the frozen snow, and dark grey clouds covered the sky. They had just turned back along one of the forest tracks which they had pursued until it came out by the side of the Otonabee, without finding any trace of steps or any marks of the lost Minnie, when they saw a cutter, drawn by a fine grey horse, trotting briskly along the road before them.

"Uncle Henry's grey mare!" exclaimed Denham.

"And I guess 'tis Holford himself driving," added Ichabod.