
THE FUGITIVE

corpses, forgetful of all but my own need. Now I was in little better stress, being worn with fatigue, my eyes held open by effort. The man was not a soldier; he was nothing to me, nor had I any interest in the taproom quarrel wherein he was shuffled off. So I drew a quilt over him, crossed to the other side, and lay down on a pile of clean straw. I could not see the hidden form from where I lay, nor did I give another thought to its presence, looking to the priming of my pistols, and loosening my swordbelt that I might rest with more ease. Yet, weary as I was, I lay there for some time, staring up at the roof, my mind busy with events.

All that had occurred to place me in this predicament passed before me in review. Up to this moment I had had no time for thought except to escape, to penetrate the closing lines of the allies. But now memory returned and I saw again the mess-tent, the table strewn with cards, the faces of the men crowding about me; I heard the oath and felt the blow; I looked once more into the hated features