

He had a good voice. When the last note had floated away I remounted, but there was a charm in the spot, something particular and individual because while we were looking at it before turning our horses' heads away the singer said: 'I wonder what is the name of this place,' and the other man remarked: 'Why, there is no village here,' and the first one insisted: 'No, I mean this spot, this very place.' The wounded trooper decided that it had no name probably. But he was wrong. It had a name. The hill, or the rock, or the wood, or the whole had a name. I heard of it by chance later. It was—Lastaola."

A cloud of tobacco smoke from Mills' pipe drove between my head and the head of Mr. Blunt, who, strange to say, yawned slightly. It seemed to me an obvious affectation on the part of that man of perfect manners, and, moreover, suffering from distressing insomnia.

"This is how we first met and how we first parted," he said in a weary, indifferent tone. "It's quite possible that she did see her uncle on the way. It's perhaps on this occasion that she got her sister to come out of the wilderness. I have no doubt she had a pass from the French Government giving her the completest freedom of action. She must have got it in Paris before leaving."

Mr. Blunt broke out into worldly, slightly cynical smiles.

"She can get anything she likes in Paris. She could get a whole army over the frontier if she liked. She could get herself admitted into the Foreign Office at one o'clock in the morning if it so pleased her. Doors fly open before the heiress of Mr. Allègre. She has inherited the old friends, the old connections. . . . Of course, if she were a toothless old woman . . . But, you see, she isn't. The ushers in all the ministries bow down to the ground therefore, and voices from the innermost sanctums take on an eager tone when they say, '*Faites entrer.*' My mother knows something about it. She has followed