

blackened cavern. Every moral difference was represented there. Those who led abandoned lives were plainly recognizable, their guilty consciences finding expression in their livid faces. These jostled the refined and delicate lady, who, in the awful democracy of the hour, brushed against thief and harlot. Little children wailed for their lost parents, and many were trampled under foot. Parents cried for their children, women shrieked for their husbands, some praying, many cursing with oaths as hot as the flames that crackled near. Multitudes were in no other costumes save those in which they sprang from their beds. Altogether it was a strange incongruous writhing mass of humanity such as the world never looked upon, pouring into what might seem, in its horrors, the mouth of hell.

As Dennis entered the utter darkness a confused roar smote his ear that might have appalled the stoutest heart, but he was now oblivious to everything save Christine's danger. With set teeth he put his shoulder against the living mass and pushed with the strongest till he emerged into the glare of the north side. Here escaping from the throng somewhat, he made his way rapidly to the Ludolph mansion, which to his joy he found was still considerably to the windward of the fire. But from the southwest he saw that another line of flame was bearing down upon it.

The front door was locked, and the house utterly dark. He rung the bell furiously, but there was no response. He walked around under the window and shouted, but the place remained as dark and silent as a tomb. He pounded on the door, but its massive thickness scarcely admitted of a reverberation.

"They must have escaped," he said; "but, merciful heaven, there must be no uncertainty in this case. What shall I do?"

The windows of the lower story were all strongly guarded and hopeless but one opening on the balcony of Christine's studio seemed practicable if it could be reached. A half grown elm swayed its graceful branches over the balcony, and Dennis knew the tough and fibrous nature of this tree. In the New England woods of his early home he had learned to climb for nuts like a squirrel, and so with no great difficulty he mounted up the trunk and dropped from an overhanging branch to the vantage-point he sought. The window was down from the top, but the lower sash was fastened. He could see the catch by the light of the fire. He broke the pane of glass nearest it, hoping

that the crash might awaken Christine, if she were still there. But after the clatter died away there was no sound. He then noisily raised the sash and stepped in.

What a rush of memories came over him as he looked around the familiar place. There was the spot where he stood and asked for the love that he had valued more than life. There stood the easel where, through Christine's gifted touch, his painted face had pleaded with scarcely less eloquence, till he blotted it out with his own hand. In memory of it all his heart again failed him, and he sighed,

"She will never love me."

But there was no time for sentiment. He called loudly: "Miss Ludolph, awake! awake! for your life!"

There was no answer. "She must be gone," he said. The front room, facing toward the west, he knew to be her sleeping apartment. Going through the ordinary passage of the city houses, he knocked loudly, and called again; but in the silence that followed he heard his own watch tick, and his heart beat. He pushed the door open with the feeling of one who was profaning a shrine, and looked timidly in. Even in that thrilling hour of peril and anxiety, his eye was enraptured by the beauty of the room. Not only was it furnished with the utmost luxuriance, but every thing spoke of a quaint and cultured taste, from the curious marble clock and bronze on the mantel, even to the pattern of the Turkey carpet on which the glare of the fire, as it glinted through the shutters, played faintly. One of the most marked features, however, was an exquisite life-size statue of Diana at the foot of the bed, grasping her bow with one hand, and in the act of seizing an arrow with the other, as if aroused to self-defence. When Dennis first saw it, he was so startled by its life-like attitude that he stepped back into the passage. But, with all the beauty of the room, it was utterly pagan; not a single thing suggested Christian faith or a knowledge of the true God. With the exception of its modern air, it might just as well have been the resting-place of a Greek or Roman maiden of rank.

Reassured, he timidly advanced again, and then for the first time, between two marble statuettes holding back the curtains of the bed, saw Christine, but looking more white and deathlike than the marble itself.

She lay with her face toward him. Her hair of gold, unconfined, streamed over the pillow; one fair round arm, from which her