

The English government didn't like it, but they paid, and debited the Turks, which was merely a matter of book keeping, But Niko for reasons best known to himself had never troubled Kiorfi before.

When Calliope thought on all these things her courage failed her and Stephanos had a hard time till the messenger from Niko arrived. He proved to be Abdallah the Ziebeck.

He called on Stephanos quite in the ordinary course of business. The children were well taken care of. Poor Calliope! half her trouble seemed to go when she knew they were well: but her heart sank fathoms deep when she heard the figure at which the ransom had been fixed.

Niko's terms were peremptory. Two hundred pounds on the seventh day or—!!!

Abdallah the Ziebeck went his way. He was to return that day week for the money. If it was paid the children would be sent back the following day. If not—!!!

Two hundred pounds! Where were they to find two hundred pounds? Stephanos had thirty in the bank but could he raise another hundred and seventy?

He started off for Symrna that very afternoon and until he returned Calliope neither eat nor slept. An old and haggard woman greeted him under the trellis vine, and she knew by his face that he had been unable to raise the money.

He had brought his own thirty pounds and had