

gropingly to the couch. She reached down towards it, but drew back as if in affright; for a dumb, desolating fear was upon her.

But with that direful courage which is the last gift to the hopeless, she stooped down again, and her fingers touched Valmond's cold hands.

They ran up his breast, to his neck, to his face, and fondled it, as only life can fondle death, out of that pitiful hunger which never can be satisfied in this world; then they moved with an infinite tenderness to his eyes, now blind like hers, and lingered there in the kinship of eternal loss.

A low, anguished cry broke from her, "Valmond—my love!" and she fell forward upon the breast of her lost Napoleon.

When the people gathered again in the little church upon the hill, Valmond and his adventure had become almost a legend, so soon are men and events lost in the distance of death and ruin.

The Curé preached, as he had always done, with a simple, practical solicitude; but towards the end of his brief sermon he paused, and, with a serious tenderness of voice, said,—