

*mon ami*. Thanks for your amiable complaisance; and now I retire to follow you in dreams. *Bon soir*."

With a silent chuckle, he stepped from St. Udo's tent and disappeared to seek his own quarters.

Thoms, too, clasped up his tiny note-book, and creeping round the side of the tent, and observing that St. Udo sat absorbed in dark reverie, he wrapped himself in his blanket, and threw himself at St. Udo's feet, and soon fell asleep.

Then the night grew black and late, and silence brooded solemnly above the camp, broken only by the faint moan of the sleepless wanderer, or the picket's hollow tramp.

Twice the devoted preserver of St. Udo's life softly raised his head to look at Colonel Brand, and sank down again, and still the lonely man sat gazing into the lurid embers of the waning watch-fire, thinking his thoughts of gall.

Just before dawn he thought he heard a movement in the camp, a faint, uncertain tripping of a wary foot, a sly whistle, twice repeated.

Through the murky gloom St. Udo peered with languid interest at a spot of fire gently undulating toward his tent.

What could it be? A cannoneer's slow march! But what could bring a battery there—and at that hour?

Unwilling to alarm needlessly his slumbering command, he slid back from the glare of the camp-fire into the shadow of his tent, and rising, bent his steps to the neighborhood of the suspicious object.

A passing breeze, laden with the perfume of the familiar cigar, a brighter glow, revealing the drooping nose and pursed-up lips, declared the identity of the prowler.

"Pshaw, you Calembours again—what sets you prowling about again like a cat on the leads, or, rather a hungry jackal in a graveyard?"

"*Mai foi!* you wear your tongue passably loose, *mon ami*. A night cat? No, worse luck. No pretty little kittens to chase round here. A jackal among *les cadores*? You have too many of that sort down there already, stripping the dead and the living, too. Still, let us not scandalize the profession. the calling of the jackal is a noble one when there is genius and *finesse* to raise it from the *metier* to the art. But where the jackal points the lion pounces. You call me the jackal. *Eh, bien j'accepte*—it is mine to point, but it is for you, Monsieur le Lion, to take the leap."

"A truce to your riddles, and say what you've got to say—though why you can't come out with it openly, I can't conceive."

"Find, then, my little meaning," whispered the chevalier, impressively. "In two words, you shall be *au courant* with the affair. We have come here to push our fortune, but the jade flouts us, and ranks herself under the standard of the foe. Let us follow her thither. For you and for me there is neither North nor South, Federal nor Confederate. Soldiers of Fortune, we follow wherever glory leads the way, and victory fills the pocket. What of this last bagatelle of a victory to-day? We have escaped with our skins to-day; to-morrow we will loose them. No, *mon ami*, the South will win the day; so join we the Southern chivalry as becomes *chevaliers d'honneur*."

"Why, you precious scoundrel! I always thought you somewhat of a puppy, but to propose this to me, an Englishman and a gentleman! Draw, you treacherous hound—draw, and defend yourself!"

And the steel blade glistened like the sword of the avenging angel before the eyes of the astonished Hun.

"*Sacre, mon Dieu!* Has he gone mad?" was his sole reply, as with the practical skill of an accomplished *maitre d'armes* his ready rapier was set, and parrying the lunges of his vexed opponent.

Still, with muttered explanations, blaspheming ejaculations and apologies, intermingled with furious rallies, he sought to moderate the just wrath of St. Udo, till at last, hearing loud shouts and footsteps approaching, by a quick turn he evaded St. Udo's pass, and dashed his sword out of his hand high in the air. Ere St. Udo could stoop to recover it, the traitor dealt him a mighty blow over the head, which felled him to the ground, and the last remembrance he had was the taunting "*au revoir*" of the renegade as he plunged into the thicket and vanished from pursuit.

When St. Udo recovered, he found himself surrounded by eager faces, and Thoms kneeling in the attitude of anxiety beside him, staring at him with intentness.

"What's all this, colonel?" demanded an old officer.

"Ha, by Jove! the rascal has escaped, has he?" cried St. Udo, getting up stiffly by the help of Thoms' shoulder.

"Who—who? A Confederate?" was cried on all sides.

"No, indeed, not a brave foe, but our precious Colonel Calembours himself. He has deserted to Lee's army, and had the audacity to tell his soborne to me. Quick, Thoms, your arm, man! I must communicate with the general and set scouts on his track."

St. Udo hastened to the general's tent as