

call it a lunette—half-way down the slope yonder, so placed as to command the landing-place at close musket-range—it might be useful, eh? There will be trouble with Polyphile Cartier—‘Sans Quartier,’ as they call him. He is proud of his cabbages, and we might have to evict them; yes, certainly our lunette would impinge upon his cabbages. But the safety of the Fort would, of course, override all such considerations.”

He caught John by the arm and hurried him along for a better view of Sans Quartier’s cabbage-patch. And just then Mademoiselle Diane came walking swiftly towards them from the end of the *terre-plein* by the flagstaff tower. An instant later the head and shoulders of Dominique Guyon appeared above the ascent.

Clearly he was following her; and as she drew near John read, or thought he read, a deep trouble in the child’s eyes. But from her eyes his glance fell upon a bundle that she carried, and his own cheek paled. For the bundle was a white tunic, and it took a second glance to assure him that the tunic was a new one and not Sergeant Barboux’!

“Eh? What did I tell you? She has been rifling the stores already!” Here the Commandant caught sight of Dominique and hailed him. “Hola, Dominique!”

Dominique halted for a moment and then came slowly forward; while the girl, having greeted John with a grown woman’s dignity, stood close by her father’s elbow.

“Dominique, how many men can you spare me from Boisveyrac, now that the harvest is over?”

“For what purpose do you wish men, monsieur?”

“Eh? That is my affair, I hope.”

The young man’s face darkened, but he controlled himself to say humbly, “Monsieur rebukes me with justice. I should not have spoken so; but it was in alarm for monsieur’s interests.”

“You mean that you are unwilling to spare me a single man? Come, come, my friend—the harvest is gathered; and, apart from that, my interests are the king’s. Positively you must spare me half-a-dozen for his Majesty’s *corvée*.”