

all they could because they knew that it was only the greatest haste would save them, but their strength became more and more exhausted. Several times already, one after the other, they flagged, and then, if they aroused themselves, it was by a desperate effort.

We found ourselves in a horrible position, and if I trembled, it was not for myself but Aninia.

I knocked over some others of our enemies, but their losses no longer stopped them in their course : they were now entirely behind us ; their growling became more distinct—I perceived their bloody jaws, their terrible teeth, their thirsty and dripping tongues, and their eyes which shot forth flames.

What a hideous horde ! it makes one shudder. I had no more powder ; I possessed no other arms to defend myself against these furious wolves than my two pistols, which were not discharged, my hunting knife and the butt end of my gun.

Kosko had remarked all that. " There remains to us yet one hope," said he, " I remember having seen, when we passed here, a hunter's cabin which ought not to be far from here, if we manage to reach it, we may be saved. In the contrary case, the wolves will devour us and assuage their wild hunger with our bodies. Sir," continued he, in a trembling voice, " if this misfortune happens us, you have loaded pistols. Oh ! then be charitable, give to your dear sister a quick death, that she may not have to suffer a slow and cruel agony under the teeth of the cursed wolves."

I looked with stupor on this old servant ; a tear rolled down his furrowed cheeks, he gave me a sign with his head to affirm the terrible sense of his words.

Never shall I forget that moment. An icy coldness stole over me ; I looked at the mild and charming figure of my sister, and raising my eyes to heaven with despair, it appeared that help could come only miraculously from above, for this innocent and pious being, who in her resignation to the will of God, forgot all the dangers which surrounded her.

Suddenly we saw on two sides of us our bloody enemies, I remarked they smelt the contents of the sleigh and appeared to reconnoitre before attacking it.

In this imminent danger, I felt despair seize my heart. My left hand grasped the pistol, and with an uncertain look I sought in the head of my sister the place where death would most surely and promptly come, then I turned away with an inexpressible horror at the thought of this fratricide. My ideas became confused, my feeble reason vacillated like the flame of a candle exposed to a hard wind.