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rades," growled the brute, with a scowl, taking some of the other's vehement passion into his more dogged, sluggish nature.

"Colonel, you are right. He *is* the traitor you declared, and I give my voice for his death. Aye, and by the Holy Cross, mine shall be the hand to punish him;" and he raised it on high and clenched it while the fury of his rage flashed from his eyes, flushed his mobile swarthy face, and vibrated in his impetuous, vindictive utterance. I had never seen a man more completely overwhelmed by the flood of passion; and for the moment I half expected him to turn his pistol on me there and then and send a bullet into my brain.

Colonel Livenza appeared also to have some such thought for he put himself between us.

"We must be cautious, Corpola," he said, and drew him aside to confer apparently as to the best means of dealing with me, Valera meanwhile keeping me covered with his revolver.

What to do I could not think. I made no show of resistance; that was clearly not my cue at present; but I had no intention of giving in without a very desperate attempt to escape; and I stood waiting for the moment which would give me the chance I sought, and planning the best means. By hook or crook I must get possession of one of the revolvers, and I watched with the vigilance of a lynx for an opportunity. I was a stronger man than either of the three and my muscles were always in excellent trim, and in a tussle on equal terms I should not have feared the result of a scrimmage with two of them. Unarmed, however, I was completely at their mercy; and hence my anxiety.

The Colonel and Corpola were conferring together,