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"Your experience becomes intensely interesting," Macdonald said, forgetting his first feeling of amusement, and becoming more and more anxious to listen to the remarkable tale which Jack seemed to find pleasure in relating, every sentence evidently relieving him gradually of the burden which mysterious secrets inevitably force upon mankind.

"At first," and Jack's voice sank to an audible whisper, "I was romantic enough to fancy the Good Spirit of the Mountains had welcomed me with the protecting love of a father for his first-born; and, imbued with that exhilarating idea, I plunged boldly and fearlessly into the torrents and successfully landed my outfit at every venture. But during the past few days I have come to believe in my silent and invisible Indian guide, and have become reconciled to his distant companionship."

Macdonald favored Jack with another sharp glance loosened the tobacco in his pipe with his pen-knife, pillowed his head in his hands, and, while emitting the fragrant smoke lazily between his lips, gazed long and earnestly at the Castle.

Jack again broke the silence:

"And now that I have replied to your questions, will you kindly satisfy my curiosity and tell me from whence you come, and your mission?"

"Pardon my reverie; but your tale is one of the strangest and most interesting I have listened to for many a day." And as Macdonald spoke, he surprised himself with the indulgence of a long sigh and a strong