

had a strange, half-dazed expression in them as he looked at his father without uttering a word.

'Thank God, laddie, for a very narrow escape!' exclaimed the factor in a reverent, grateful tone; and then, turning to the Norwegian, 'And thank you, Wentzel, for your timely aid. I doubt much if I could have saved the boy alone.'

Wentzel blushed, and murmured something about its being nothing, he was only too glad to be of any service. Then Archie seemed to come to himself, and laying his hand upon his father's knee, said in such a pleading way, 'Was I very much to blame, father? I really could not help it. Spot was frightened by the guns, and I could not hold him.'

Evidently he dreaded his father's saying something like this: 'There now, Archie, it is just as I told you. You're not fit to take part in a hunt yet, you see.'

But if any such idea was in Mr. M'Kenzie's mind, he took good care not to express it. On the contrary, he answered the boy's anxious question by asking another, which completely turned the current of his thoughts—

'Why, laddie, what's become of your gun?'

Archie instinctively threw his hand to his shoulder, but no gun was there. Without doubt he had dropped it.

'Let it drop, eh?' said the factor, smiling. 'Well, it'll need a new lock, stock, and barrel by this time, if I'm not mistaken. Did you fire it off before you let it go?'

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