

recollect himself and turned upon John roughly. "Step back, you, and find if the others are in sight. We, here, have private matters to discuss."

John obeyed. The first turn of the cliff shut off the warm westerly glow, and he went back through twilight. He knew now why Barboux had lagged behind on the *Richelieu*, in scorn of discipline. The man must be entrusted with some secret missive of Montcalm's, and, being puffed up with it, had in a luckless hour struck out a line of his own. To turn back now would mean his ruin; might end in his standing up to be shot with his back to a wall. . . .

Between the narrow walls of the pass night was closing down rapidly. John lifted his face towards the strip of sky aloft, greenish-blue and tranquil. . . .

He fell back—his heart, after one leap, freezing—slowly freezing to a standstill, his hands spreading themselves against the face of the rock.

What voice was that, screaming? . . . one—two—three—horrible human screams, rending the twilight, beating down on his ears, echoing from wall to wall. . . .

The third and last scream died out in a low, bubbling wail. Close upon it rose a sound which John could not mistake—the whoop of Indians. He plucked his hands from the rock, and ran; but, as he turned to run, in the sudden silence a body thudded down upon the path behind him.

In twenty strides he was back again at the issue of the pass. The two Indians had vanished. Barboux's gross body alone blocked the pale daylight there. Barboux lingered a moment, stooping over the murdered man; but he too ran at the sound of John's footsteps, and the corpse, as John came abreast of it, slid over in a silly heap, almost rolling against his legs.

He leaped aside and cleared it, and in a moment was pelted down the slope after the Sergeant, who flung back an agonised doubtful glance, and recognising his pursuer grunted with relief. At their feet, and far below, spread a wide plain—