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A few hours later, the sexton comes to ring the Angelus, with his wonted punctuality totally unconscious of the crime that has been committed. As he descends from the belfry, a peculiar sound attracts his attention. He listens... I must be dreaming yet, I certainly thought I heard a moan. Yes, there it is again, and, if I mistake not, it comes from the direction of the sanctuary. He hastens down the aisle and to his consternation sees a human form lying on the altar steps. He runs to the presbytery and notifies the priest, who immediately returns to the church with him.

As soon as the wounded man sees him, he whispers faintly : " I defended the Good God. I don't think he touched Him... Oh ! tell me he has not touched Him ! " And as if in explanation repeats again and again : " I made my First Communion... I. "

The listening priest takes in the situation at a glance ; the vermilion stream, the bloody foot-prints leading from the altar to the door, the struggle between the robbers, the murderer's flight, as the voice grown weaker adds : " Father, I defended Him with my life. I could not let Him be taken... Hands like his and mine dare not touch the Good God... tell me He is there still unharmed. "

The priest's heart overflows with tender pity and boundless admiration for the speaker, guilty without doubt, but withal faithful to the memory of his First Communion. Opening the tabernacle he takes the ciborium raises it above the dying hero while " the Good God, " Himself, whom he so nobly defended traces over him the sign of mercy and pardon.

And thus, Andrew Gerbois, alias Hardy, breathed his last, absolved by the Good God, his eyes on the golden ciborium he had given his life to guard.

