
The Maid of the Forest

up straight, and fastened her disarranged hair. The narrow trail led through dense thickets and about a slight hill; in five minutes we were out of sight of the road, alone in the wilderness. To the right through trees was the glimmer of the river. The horse panted heavily, and the way was rough. There was blood I noticed now, on his flank, and he limped slightly as he walked. I staggered and reeled from weariness, feeling reaction from excitement, yet kept grimly on until we must have covered two miles, wandering in and out among the low hills. No sounds reached us, and as we came into a narrow ravine, promising concealment, I released my grasp on the bit, and staggered back against the bank. Mademoiselle slipped from her seat and hastened to me.

"You are worn out, Monsieur? wounded?"

"Worn out, yes, but nothing has touched me save a blow or two. I — I think we can rest now."

Then it occurred to me, a thought that had swept into my mind once before — we had no provisions, no chance to get away and we dare not shoot, nor build a fire.

"What is it, Monsieur?"

"Why, we have nothing to eat, René," I admitted reluctantly. "It is a long journey to the Ohio, and how are we going to keep from starving? Faith! but I am near that now."