

Ahasistari sat alone in his rocky hiding-place. Ever and anon he cast a meaning glance towards the west, where the sky was yet tinged with gold, although the orb of day had disappeared. Then he rested his head upon his knees and remained immovable. His rifle lay at his feet, and his remaining arms upon it, as if he had just been preparing them carefully for immediate use. Twilight came, still the chief moved not. At length he arose, and approaching the entrance of the cavern, looked out upon the forest, listening intently for some welcome sound — nothing struck upon his ear save the rustling of the leaves and the low swinging of the overhanging branches. There was silence in the vast forest; the hum of the little insect, as it uttered its evening prayer, was the only sound of living thing that broke upon the solitude. For a moment it seemed that a shadow of doubt passed across the brow of the warrior. It occurred to him that his party might have been cut off. He could not doubt but that Watook had collected a force and followed in pursuit; and that Quickfoot, his first messenger, had fallen in with them, as otherwise the saga-