

coarse rank curtain of vegetation, quite still and motionless (but for the breeze among the upper leaves), and the sombre distance, dark with pine, had the mystery of a vault. It was difficult to believe his pursuers harboured there, perhaps reloading the weapon that had put so doleful a conclusion to his travels with the gallant little horse he had bought on the coast of Fife. That silence, that prevailing mystery, seemed to be the essence and the mood of this land, so different from his own, where laughter was ringing in the orchards and a myriad towns and clamant cities brimmed with life.