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"THE STRANGEST ADVENTURE,"

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"Yes, I could tell you plenty of stories like that; I've seen a few adventures in my time."

"You have, indeed; but won't you give me a few more? It's early yet."

We were sitting in the half-demolished summer-house of a little village inn, on the coast of Brittany—in all probability the only wakeful inhabitants of the whole place, for sitting up till eleven p. m. is an enormity unknown in that primitive region. My companion's stern swarthy face and tangled black beard, seen beneath the uncertain light of the raising moon, might have made him appear, to any person of unsteady nerves, rather an "uncanny" comrade for a midnight *tete-a-tete*; but in spite of his repellent manner and miner-like roughness of speech, there was an indescribable *something* in his tone and bearing, which convinced me that, however he might have fallen, or been forced into his present nondescript way of life, he had (to use the common phrase) "been a gentleman once." This, however, was mere conjecture on my part; for in all the marvellous diorama of personal adventure which he had spread before me—riotous revels in Australia taverns, succeeded by days of deadly peril in Antarctic seas; fighting with pirates in the Straits of Malacca, following upon weeks of luxurious indolence amid the lotus-eaters of Brazil; sleigh-driving across Russian steppes, and bear-hunts in American forests—there was not the slightest hint at his early life or original station in society. It was at the close of a vivid description of a hurricane off Cape Horn that my Ulysses paused in his narrative, and I now reiterate my request for another page from this eventful autobiography.

"What! not tired yet? It's not every one that could stand hearing a fellow talk so long about himself."

"Well," said I, "I'll only ask you for one more; tell me the strangest adventure you ever had."

The wanderer started slightly, and then said, in an altered voice, "You've made a better bargain than you think for; I *will* tell you the