

It was not so long ago either. For the man might have been alive to-day, though he would have been old and bent no doubt; for he was a thick-set man, and must have been strong. He had, indeed, carried his lead up from the road that runs by the Guadelle river. Was he not to be traced all the way up the short cut through the olive terraces by one bloody footprint at regular intervals? You could track his passage across the "Place," towards the fountain of which he had fallen short like a poisoned rat that tries to reach water and fails.

He lay quite alone, still grasping the gun which he had never laid aside since boyhood. No one went to him; no one had attempted to help him. He lay as he had fallen, with a thin stream of blood running slowly from one trouser-leg. For this was Corsican work—that is to say, dirty work—from behind a rock, in the back, at close range, without warning or mercy, as honest men would be ashamed to shoot the merest beast of the forest. It was as likely as not a charge of buck-shot low down in the body, leaving the rest to hemorrhage or gangrene.

All Olmeta knew of it, and every man took care that it should be no business of his. Several had approached, pipe in mouth, and looked at the dead man without comment; but all had gone away again, idly, indifferently. For in this the most beautiful of the