

fettered in a nest of great and angry snakes.

Snatching up the saw once more, she returned with fresh courage to the fight. But she found herself baffled. The water was so thick with the discolouring fluid that she was unable to strike without risk of maiming herself.

Involuntarily, she again turned a despairing glance toward the shore—so near, so secure, yet to her so utterly inaccessible. But now it was not so utterly deserted as when she had last appealed to it for help. Over the waving tops of the tall pampas-grass, only about a hundred yards away, she saw the crown of a sombrero, bobbing gently up and down so that now and then the broad brim was visible. Evidently a man on horseback was following a road or bridle-path through the giant grasses.

At the sight, at the knowledge that help was so near, Elsie's self-reliance suddenly forsook her. The panic which she had so valiantly held at bay overwhelmed her. Dropping the saw and grabbing wildly at the gunwale with both hands, she broke into a succession of piercing screams.

The sombrero stopped bobbing over the grass-tops. For about three seconds it was quite still, as if its owner was trying to