

the withered branches and leaves under her feet. Suddenly, the dog stopped and growled; suspecting that he had scented the game, Margaret called him, and whistled, and drew her dark cloak closer round her, for it was chilly, and whistled again.

"Come here, sir!" she called threateningly, but Rollo growled and growled again, and refused to stir.

Then Margaret too, saw in the very dim light a dark figure, and she saw the muzzle of a gun, and was half-blinded and deafened with a flash and a report; and she lay extended on the ground, while a retreating figure broke through briars and bushes and gained the road. And Rollo sat beside his mistress, moaning and whining in distress.

"Why does not Maggie come back?" asked Lady Granton anxiously, as ten o'clock struck, and they had seen nothing of the absent one.

"I don't know," replied Teresa, "I told her she ought not to go."

"I told her she might go, dear," replied the mother, gently; "but she should not have stayed so late. It is a bright night, however."

"She has Rollo with her," said Sir Robert; "but I will go and meet her, which way will she be coming back?"

"She went through the corner plantation," said one of the girls.

"I hope that dog won't disturb the game," said Sir Robert to himself as he crossed the lawn lighting his cigar. He reached the little gate that led from the garden into the park, when the report of a gun disturbed his equanimity. "Those poachers!" he ejaculated impatiently, and ran back to the drawing-room windows. "Emily, send Richard and Simmonds to me directly, and tell them to bring my gun; quick."

In a few moments the two men-servants joined him, and, hastily explaining what was the matter, Sir Robert hurried with them into the park, and towards the preserves in which he fancied the shot was fired. They gained the underwood, but all was quiet and peaceful: a startled hare ran across their path, but that was all.

Baffled and discomfited, they turned, and were going across the path in another direction, when a dismal howl fell on their ears.

"Rollo!" exclaimed all three.

"It must be the corner plantation. Good heavens! he was with Maggie," cried Sir Robert, in the greatest alarm and distress; and they ran towards the enclosure from which the sound came.

"It is Rollo," said the butler, as the dog gave another dismal howl. "I'm afraid he is hurt, sir."

"I hope it may be Rollo, and not Miss Margaret," said the footman, out of breath.

The whinings grew nearer and nearer, and at last they reached the place, and Sir Robert jumped the gate, and hurried into the plantation.

"Rollo! Rollo!" he called, and the dog came bounding to his side, and then barked, and ran away again into the copse. Sir Robert followed, and by the dim light saw Margaret lying there upon the ground. He was a man with great power of repressing his feelings, but he bent down over his favourite child, and gave one short, deep groan.

"Oh, Maggie, Maggie," he said.

"Is that you, papa?" was the answer, to his great relief and surprise.

"I thought nobody would ever come; I am so glad."

"My darling, what is it?"

"Only my arm, I think; but I can't get up," she said faintly. "I tied it up with my cloak; can you carry me, papa?" for her father, with the help of the others, had raised her from the ground.

"Carry you? yes," he said tenderly; but Margaret did not hear him, for she had fainted away.

They bore her quickly to the hall, and in a few moments a man-servant galloped off on the swiftest horse for the doctor.

Before very long he was there, and the shot was extracted, and the arm was set and dressed, for it was broken.

Then, only, had they time to think of the doer of the deed.