

which only Our Lady's mercy can allay, do hereby appoint thee guardian of the girl Annette, my house and lands and all therein. And by this way shall ye come to it—three scant leagues southward to the river, across it to the Indian graves, and then the fifth part of a league south along the brook that flows by them. And if “—

Here the letter ended as if the death-faintness had overcome the writer.

Imbert passed a hand in mute astonishment over his coarse hair, and even Biencourt looked amazed. Then each spoke a word.

“D’Auvergne,” said Imbert.

“Annette,” said Biencourt.

It was very curious both agreed. It was Pierre Euston’s favourite, Imbert said, and of course the girl was dead too by now or married to one of the savages. Biencourt thought not. She was likely alive and the name was a very pretty one. His shoulder had ceased to pain. They would go at once.

Soon they had donned their bearskin hunting-coats, and with snow-shoed feet clattered noisily through the doorway, leaving Memberton alone to keep his vigil in the chair of state with the dim candle-light touching his wearied face, and the shadows writhing across the walls.

Outside the moon was high and the wind came in gusty moans. They walked slowly down the deserted square, bounded on both sides by charred ruins and shattered rafters, till they reached the entrance way. No cannon stood upon the dismantled bastions and the stone gateway carved with the fleur-de-lis of France lay in a dozen pieces at their feet. The snow was hard and progress rapid. They came to open spaces where duels had once been fought between