

CHAPTER V

"BY THE RIVER STARZKE. . . . IT WAS SO DONE"

THERE was absolute silence for a moment. The two men fixed their gaze upon the girl. The fear which had first come to her face passed suddenly, and a will, new-born and fearless, possessed it. Yesterday this will had been only a trembling, undisciplined force, but since then she had been passed through the tests which her own soul, or Destiny, had set for her, and she had emerged a woman, confident and understanding, if tremulous. In days gone by her adventurous, lonely spirit had driven her to the prairies, savagely riding her Indian pony through the streets of Manitou and out on the North Trail, or south through *coulées*, or westward into the great woods, looking for what she never found.

Her spirit was no longer the vague thing driving here and there with pleasant torture. It had found freedom and light; what the Romany folk call its own *tan*, its home, though it be but home of each day's trek. That wild spirit was now a force which understood itself in a new if uncompleted way. It was a sword free from its scabbard.

The adventure of the Carillon Rapids had been a kind of deliverance of an unborn thing which, desiring the overworld, had found it. A few hours ago the face of Ingolby, as she waked to consciousness in his arms, had taught her something suddenly; and the face of Felix Marchand had taught her even more. Something new and strange had happened to her, and her father's uncouth but piercing mind saw the change in her. Her quick,