

"Not even a life for a life," he persisted. "Harry shared with me the glory of saving you; while to you I owe everything."

"Still wrong. I could have done you no service but for Harry's help. So between my father's foe and myself there is no obligation."

"Even so, shall we not be friends?"

"What can friendship do? It is like a mockery to offer it."

"Please don't say that."

Her only reply was a low, hard laugh. She felt like weeping till her heart would break, but she would not.

"It is terribly hard, and what you say is true," he continued. "Still I won't give up. Something must be done. If there is a place anywhere that will suit your father's condition better than where he is now, I will see that you and he are taken to it as soon as daylight comes; and if you say so, I shall not appear at all, nor any of my men. It can all be done by your own followers."

Marie softened a little.

"It is good of you," she said at last. "I really don't want to be ungrateful; perhaps there is a way you could help us, but if I tell you I shall have to give away a secret."

"A secret will be as sacred in my heart as it is in yours."

"Will you swear to keep it?"

"By all that is holy, I swear."

For more than a minute Marie pondered. It was hard to come to a decision upon so important a subject in so brief a time. And the decision made must be final.