

"The dolt! The idiot! He will spoil all by his cursed nonsense! What is he afraid of? Whom does he take me for? Hist; holloa there! It is I:" he calls out in a suppressed voice. "Stop, I say, Barillot! The ass! He is afraid of his own shadow."

It is true. "The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth." The wretched fugitive, alone with his terrors, hears in every rustle of a leaf, much more in this stealthy fall of a human foot, the avenger of blood on his track.

At last he is brought to bay. His back is to the surging billow, his foot is on the last verge of the rock at the extreme southern point of the promontory.

Delaval, advancing, hears through the darkness the ominous click of a gun-hammer being cocked.

The case is imminent. An instant more, and the fool will fire on his friend. He pulls out and waves his white handkerchief, and utters in a louder tone:

"It is I; Delaval."

At last he thinks he may venture to advance. But the moment he is near enough to discern clearly, he experiences an involuntary shiver.

In the eyes of Barillot, there is the sombre hostility of flight, and all the menace which there is in fear. They are the eyes of a hunted wolf that glare at him over the gaping gun-barrel.

Bristly, tattered and skulking, restless and shivering, this man is dangerous to encounter.

Desperation does not discriminate. It is more to be dreaded than hostility itself.

Hostility pauses to pick out its foe. Despair strikes at the first comer.

Delaval realized all this in a breath. In that breath the gun-hammer fell; the cap snapped: he might safely break within the guard now.

Fear and cowardice are akin. Both are merciless.

Was this the reason that, as he rushed in upon and grappled with the wretch, Delaval was not content with merely throwing him down, but he must also kick and stamp upon him?

The wretch had frightened him; and a coward cannot forgive a fright.

Probably also, Delaval reasoned just as does the keeper of a