

# THE WILD OLIVE

## I



INDING himself in the level wood-road, whose open aisle drew a long, straight streak across the sky, still luminous with the late-lingering Adirondack twilight, the tall young fugitive, hatless, coatless, and barefooted, paused a minute for reflection. As he paused, he listened; but all distinctiveness of sound was lost in the play of the wind, up hill and down dale, through chasm and over crag, in those uncounted leagues of forest. It was only a summer wind, soft and from the south; but its murmur had the sweep of the eternal breath, while, when it waxed in power, it rose like the swell of some great cosmic organ. Through the pines and in the underbrush it whispered and crackled and crashed, with a variety of effect strangely bewildering to the young man's city-nurtured senses. There were minutes when he felt that not only the four country constables whom he had escaped were about to burst upon him, but that weird armies of gnomes were ready to trample him down.

Out of the confusion of wood-noises, in which his unpractised ear could distinguish nothing, he waited for a