

"Robbers!" said M. de Lambert. "What do you mean?"

The young ladies and Brovel were looking out of the door, Louise pale and troubled.

"No harm to any, m'sieur," I answered. "Put up your pistol."

I opened the coach door. M. de Lambert, hissing with anger, leaped to the road. I knew he would shoot me, and was making ready to close with him, when I heard a rustle of silk, and saw Louise between us, her tall form erect, her eyes forceful and commanding. She stepped quickly to her father.

"Let me have it!" said she, taking the pistol from his hand. She flung it above the heads of some village folk who had gathered near us.

"Why do you stop us?" she whispered, turning to me.

"So you may choose between him and me," I answered.

"Then I leave all for you," said she, coming quickly to my side.

The villagers began to cheer, and old D'ri flung his hat in the air, shouting, "Hurrah fer love an' freedom!"