

but his great, yellow, wicked face, with the background of the romantic spot where we last met."

It was Gurdon's turn now to listen. He leant forward in his chair, his whole attention concentrated upon the figure of the stranger, huddled up in the armchair at the little table opposite. He touched Venner on the arm, and indicated the figure of the man who had suffered so cruelly in some form or other.

"The plot thickens," Venner murmured. "Upon my word, he seems to know this Mark Fenwick as well as I do."

The maimed, crippled figure in the armchair had dragged himself almost to his feet, with his powerful, muscular arm propping him against the table. His wonderfully handsome face was all broken and twisted up with an expression of malignant fury. He stood there for a moment or two like a statue of uncontrollable passion, rigid, fixed, and motionless, save for the twitching of his face. Then, gradually, he dropped back into his chair again, a broken and huddled heap, quivering from head to foot with the pain caused by his recent exertion. A moment later he took from his breast pocket a silk shade, which he proceeded to tie over his eyes, as if the light hurt him. Watching his every movement with intense eagerness, the two friends saw that he had also taken from his pocket a small, silver case, about the same size as an ordinary box of safety matches. Indeed, the case looked not un-