

CHAPTER X.

THE ESCAPE TO THE CAVE.

AS Marie paddled swiftly out she could count her rapid heartbeats, in mute terror lest her father should bleed to death; while to rouse him would be doubly dangerous. For him to speak or cry out might lead to discovery; while a sudden movement on his part, not knowing where he was, could scarcely fail to upset the canoe. She could save herself, were such a catastrophe to occur, but whether she could save her father in his helpless condition was a different question.

She could hear him breathe, though he did not move. Evidently he was not dead yet, and she paddled on. As the distance between the canoe and Fingal's Notch increased, she became more hopeful, and paddled less cautiously. There was little danger of any sound from the canoe being carried back, but a full quarter of an hour elapsed before she dared to slacken her speed. By this time other islands intervened; and, pausing for a moment, she listened. There was still the occasional crack of a rifle, and looking backwards the whole sky in the far distance was illuminated. She shuddered as she fixed her eyes upon it.