

blackness to a pile of straw in one corner. The place smelt of cattle, and opposite to the spot on which he lay, he distinguished presently a soft, regular sound which he concluded to be caused by the breathing of a cow. Evidently the barn was used as a cattleshed also, though his observation of the mansion did not lead him to suppose that "Miss Meely" possessed anything approaching a herd. He remembered the old negress's warning allusion to the ram, but so far at least the darkness had revealed nothing that could prove hostile to his company. His head ached and his will seemed suddenly benumbed, so stretching himself at full length in the straw he fell, after a few troubled moments, into the deep and dreamless sleep of complete physical exhaustion.

An instant afterwards, it seemed to him, he was aroused by a light which flashed into his face from the opening door. A cold wind blew over him, and as he struggled almost blindly back into consciousness, he saw that a girl in a red cape stood holding a lantern above her head in the centre of the barn. At his first look the red cape warmed him as if it had been flame; then he became aware that a voice was speaking to him in a peculiar tone of cheerful authority. And it seemed to him that the red cape and the rich voice expressed the same dominant quality of personality.

"I thought you must be hungry," said the voice with energy, "so I've brought your supper."

Even while he instinctively grasped the tray she