

as the carriage came past I chased it again, and jumping up, resumed my seat.

For more than an hour we rattled along with unabated velocity, when on a sudden we turned abruptly into another road, with a sharpness that all but unseated me, making the vehicle oscillate violently upon its straps. It was narrow, full of ruts, and overhung with immense dark trees; we jostled along this for a mile or two, up hill and down again, round angles, and over bridges, till we stopped before a very magnificent gateway, with a porter's lodge beside it—of Gothic architecture—a most princely entrance altogether. The large carved iron gates were thrown wide, the horses sprang forward, and through we went, the motion being so rapid, and the darkness so great, that the porter, busied with his keys, did not observe me shrinking in behind.

We were now on a smooth avenue, skirting an immense park, dotted with trees, with their branches sweeping down to the very grass, while I could see animals like deer, starting out from under them as we rattled past. On the other side of the avenue was a close plantation of large trees, their stems surrounded by dense bushes.

I began now to entertain some serious misgivings about the issue of the affair.

"Here's a nice predicament to be caught in!" thought I; "what account could I give of myself now, or who would believe me? What will they do if they catch me? A precious scrape I have got myself into for no end nor purpose! This will never do, by Jove!"

And disengaging myself from my perch, I dropped to the ground, and fell aside among the bushes of the plantation, while the vehicle was speedily whirled away out of sight and hearing.

I sat me down upon a stone, and in solitude and darkness began with a heavy heart to bewail the absurdity of my situation.

"Here am I," quoth I to myself, "more than twenty miles from home, in the middle of the night, God knows where—and with how much? ah! let me see."

"I began searching my pockets, and after a rigid scrutiny made out the following inventory of their contents. A handkerchief—a little silver lancet-case, containing four of these lethal weapons—a small printed note, from a kind uncle of mine, acknowledging my committal to his care of a Mackintosh—the bones of the hand of a skeleton, wrapped up in a piece of brown paper—a thin little book, entitled "Sparks from the wheel of a man wot grinds"—a fourpenny-piece, with a hole in it—a cheroot (right Manilla,) broken in two by being sat upon—and a letter from *her*, and I kissed the paper, sweet Eliza Baster!

With a deep sigh, I restored these valuables to their former quarters, and giving scope to my imagination, began again to ponder upon the strangeness and folly of the adventure.

"All my comrades," thought I, "are now snug in their beds, and here am I, cold and alone, where I have no business to be—never was before, and with help from Heaven never will be again!—What's to be done?—Shall I lay me down among the bushes till daylight, and then pad home, a score of long Scots miles, or what the d— I shall I do?—And then there's that fellow to get a new nose at the hospital to-morrow,

and I meandering cold and hungry about the country all the while it's being so nicely shaped out and stuck on. Oh, murder! isn't it provoking?—Ha, hush!—what was that?" and I sprang to my feet in a panic of alarm, the hair rising on my head, my clothes feeling cold and rough upon my skin.

It was a sound as of some one moving stealthily among the bushes, close beside me, followed by a kind of tiny groan.

"I listened attentively; but all I could hear was the wind, and its sweeping rush, high over the treetops, and presently the bark of a dog, faint, and far, far away. It was most lonely, and the fumes of the liquor I had had overnight, being now completely dissipated, I began to feel wofully desolate and at a loss.

I had once more fallen away into cogitation, when directly I heard again the sound that had formerly disturbed me. It was now plainer, and appeared to be a kind of sputtering among the brushwood, and again there was the small cheeping infantile cry. My curiosity was now fairly roused, and summoning up all the fortitude I could command, I moved towards the spot it came from—step by step—often looking round to make sure of a clear retreat, while, at the same time, my heart was going, thump, thump, against my ribs, every beat vibrating up to my throat.

Presently the moon shone out brightly for a moment, between two passing clouds, and by the aid of a few beams penetrating under the foliage, I was enabled to perceive a hare, caught by the leg in a snare of brass-wire, planted very nicely in the interstice between two thick bramblebushes.

My eye—here was a discovery! I paused a little, looking at the struggling animal.

"What shall I do with it?" thought I.

I took the creature up, kicking and spurring, into my arms. As I did so, I felt its little heart beating, and its breath panting away, as my own had been a few minutes before. My first resolution was magnanimous.

"I shall set it free," said I. "Go, poor wanderer of the wood and wild—liberty's a glorious feast!"

"So is haresoup!" said a still, small voice within me; not from my heart, I fear, but rather from the region of the stomach. "And Nancy at the Hen and Hatchet can cook it like an angel—and then with this tail to it," said I, in continuation, "the adventure will bear telling; they can hardly laugh with their mouths full of soup. "Puss," now I turned to the trembler in my arms, "it's all up with you—prepare for death—had you as many lives as your namesake, you should die and be turned to soup;" and here I began to ponder how I should commit the murder.

Shifting the noose from its leg to its neck, I hauled tight, and waited to see it give up the ghost. But here certain rather unaccountable escapes I had had from drowning rose up in my mind, and a strange fellow-feeling possessed me.

"No, puss," said I, "you shall not be hung," and and I groped in my pockets for a knife.

But as the reader is in possession of the inventory of their contents, he will at once be aware that such an instrument was not come-at-able. The lancets, however, obtruded themselves upon my hand, and I drew forth one of them from the case, and began digging about with it, sounding for poor puss's carotid artery. But as this mode of procedure seemed hardly more speedy or effectual than the former, I put the