

The horses had disappeared. They were alone by the roadside.

"You have no bones broken," said Miquelon, "but there is an ugly gash in the head. You struck the branch of the tree." Oliver could not move; there was a turmoil in his head and a light springing before his eyes.

"The horses are gone," he said feebly, his voice sounding in his ears thin and far away.

"Yes," said Miquelon, "as soon as I dismounted, mine followed yours into the woods." The old man took a handkerchief from the inner pocket of his coat and proceeded to bind it about Oliver's head. It was woven of blue silk with a curious design in white, spreading from the centre in intricate spirals and resolving itself into delicate ferny tracery at the edges. It was an example of the subtle eastern fabrics which represent the lives of generations in the perfection and beauty of their construction.

He had hardly finished the knot which bound it, when the sound of horses hoofs was blown down the road, and the clash of men's voices in angry discussion.

"This may be someone from the Manor," said Miquelon, hastily. "I will conceal myself in the trees; if they discover you and take you to the house it will serve our purpose. Keep your eyes open. When you can come away with safety you will find me here."

Just as the foremost horseman appeared at the top of the hill, Miquelon stepped into the thicket and was out of sight. The leader was Eric Savona. His face was swollen and coarse with blotches of red, his eyes were sullen and hard. He seemed firm in his saddle, although his appearance told of a recent debauch. He was followed at a short distance by Hugh, whose dark and evil eyes leaped at once upon Oliver, as he lay, his face white in the shadow of the trees, his head turbaned by the folds of the curious handkerchief.

"Hello!" he cried, "what have we here?" at the same time reining in his beast. When they had halted, Oliver explained his plight in a very few words, and there was a consultation between the brothers. At length Eric dismounted,

and without a word, lifted Oliver into his saddle. Every movement of the horse sent the blood bounding to his head, often he reeled in his seat, and it seemed an eternity before they halted at the door of the Manor. When Eric and Hugh assisted him to dismount, the old dancing light came into his eyes, there was a tumult of deep waters in his ears, and he knew no more till he awoke in a dark, cool room.

His clothes had been removed, and he noticed at once that the scarf with which St. Pierre Miquelon had bandaged his head, had been taken off and a damp cloth lay upon his wound. He felt a pleasant sense of ease and refreshment, but when he raised his head from the pillows the room swam before him. Then he was contented to lie still and observe his surroundings. He made out from the shadows of the trees, and the light sound of the ripple breaking on the shore that he was in a room upon the ground floor, and presently from the opening and shutting of a door, and the tramp of feet, that it communicated with the hall. He wondered how long he had lain there, and whether Miquelon was still awaiting him in the wood. From the gradual decrease in the light, he judged that the evening was drawing near; but he reflected that for all he knew he might have been lying as he was for many days.

Suddenly, through the closed door rose the sound of a violent quarrel; there were curses and heavy words. "I will go in," he heard Eric protesting, with an oath. "No, you won't, let Irene go; trust a woman for worming anything out of a man." It was Hugh's voice. Then he heard the low voice of a woman trying to quiet them. Soon there came the noise of a scuffle and the great thud of a body thrust against the wall. For a moment there was silence and then the choking sound of someone struggling for breath, and the grinding of a head against the bottom of the door. Oliver sprang up in bed, and with the force of the movement his head ran full of blood, and everything went black before him.

When he came to himself the room was lighted by a candle, and a woman was bending over him, and changing the