

was like Dibdin's sailor, he would not believe that heaven could have designed to snatch him, so young, from the woman he loved. Down, down, down—another panting, breathless, agonized second or two, with the roar of the pitiless falls crashing upon his ears and deafening him, and then a terrible jerk which almost flung him off the face of the slope, and then he found himself caught and seated astride on the projection of some rock. And then the rush of the clay and the marl went on without him, and for a moment he was safe—safe if his rock still held its place, safe if the landslip went no farther, safe if any human power, any helping hand, could come to his aid in time. For a moment he felt inclined to relieve his feelings by a burst of tears. For a moment he could think of Marie again, and the hope of seeing her once more.

He lay there, horsed upon his peak of rock, unable to think of anything but the fact that the landslip had gone by him and that he might yet be saved. He did not yet dare to move, or even to look around. His whole soul was absorbed in the one desperate desire to cling fast and to cheat the rapids and the falls. He found himself in the condition of a child who has covered its head with the bedclothes, in fear of some supposed apparition, and who dares not uncover its eyes and look out to see what is really going on. By degrees he felt his nerve and his courage coming back. He was a very plucky young fellow, trained to all manner of athletic sports and well skilled to make the best use of what strength and nerve he had. But the bravest man may admit that under certain conditions of unexperienced danger he can become for a while as a little child. Hugh knew all this, and he waited without movement for his nerves to come back to him and bend themselves to his control; and he soon found that they were coming back. He dared to lift his head, and even to turn round, gripping the while for dear life—oh, how inexpressibly dear and sweet to him now!—and to survey the scene and get to know his chances. Well, things did not look badly for the moment, if he could only stick on. The moon still lit up the greater part of that ghastly and terrible scene. He was far below the level of the road. He was nearly half way down—nearly half way down to the rapids! He did not dare, as yet, to turn his eyes to the great fall on his right. He only looked down to the rapids that were rushing far—ah, not so very far—below him. He coolly surveyed the situation and the chances. It was late; the landslip had been slight and noiseless; every one in the houses above had long since been abed and asleep; there was not the slightest chance of any assistance coming to him before the early morning. Would it come even then? Even in that moment of terror he remembered hearing the old man in the museum say that he always made a study



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of the bank and the falls first thing in the morning; that from long dwelling on that spot he had come to think of himself as a sort of watchman or owner of the place, and loved to look after it. The old man would come, then, early in the morning, and would see at a glance that there had been a landslip, and would bring people to look at it—perhaps would even remember the young stranger who had left his house the night before—and if help could then be of any avail, why, surely help would come. The problem easily resolved itself into shape and explicit statement. If Hugh could cling to his rocky seat all night—all through the night—and could keep his senses about him, and no further landslip should take place, then, oh then, he might be saved and might be welcomed by Marie in Quebec. But suppose his head should reel, suppose his nerve should give way, suppose his brain should turn, suppose he should be overcome by that terrible drowsiness which he had often read of as the accompaniment of exposure and exhaustion and nervous strain, suppose he should fall into an unnatural sleep, what was to become of him then? With