"I do not believe you have the real Irma Weir in this house," he said sharply. "I believe she is dead and buried long since. You will find your-self mistaken, and Vanhorn will be furious at having been fooled."

Dr. Prudhomme's eyes flashed, but he only bit his lip and dismissed Vane by a haughty wave of the hand. He turned back into the room. Vanhorn was standing in the middle of the room, waiting for him. He touched

the doctor's arm.
"Come out on the porch, Prudhomme," he said. "I have a few words to say to you." "But first, as to our business," in-terposed the burly sheriff. "The woman we've got the warrant for-is she

"She is here in the house." "And she doesn't suspect we are about to nab her?" "She is quiet in her room. I will First, I must have a word with you, I say." interrupted Vanhorn, drawing him roughly away. The little Frenchman shot a malignant glance

at the crafty-eyed Hebrew, and moved if reluctantly with him. He wanted have a last interview with Irma Weir, and inform her that the officer waited down-stairs with a warrant for her arrest, and that he would save her on the terms he had before offered. But he obeyed the cold eye and voice f Vanhorn, and followed him to the

"And now," began the jew, planting his gaunt form and thin, sharp visage before his host, "will you have the kindness to tell me what you mean by your late conduct?' What conduct ?" said Dr. Prud-

homme sullenly. wretched girl, brought her here, of all places in the world, and permitted her to pry into a secret that is of life and death importance to both of us?" vas all accident. I wrote you

and caution. What business had you | to bring any woman here, where there was a secret to keep? And this woman, the very one who is interested in exposing the secret, you have let her find out. Of course she will expose it. She would do it if her life depended on her doing otherwise. There is nothtentairy, and to see that the top storey of the tower holds no secret when it is searched, if searched it should be. I wanted never to hear of the girl again. was in hopes she was dead and ouried, or gone out of further hear-

You made great show of having her hunted down. Reward, detective, and all that!"

You know why I did that. At first it was thought my brother would live. I knew it would gratify him to have his would-be murderess punished.' 'Ah, yes! it would so gratify him he would take his bankrupt brother as partner of his rich beesness. He would haf no wife as partner of his rich haf no wife and childs to be heir to his propertee. It would all go to his younger brother-you, Monseuir Vanhorn, It s all yours-monee, and stocks, and lands. These very house and lands

You know that is not so. I gave you the mortgage on this place in consideration that you would do-you know what.

"Yes, I know t'e compact. I wish many times and more it nevaire had been made. But it is too late now-too late! And I must do somethin' for my child's sake. I want to go away from t'is place. Monsieur Vanhorn, I will sell it to you for one-fourth part of its value—all this t'ousand acres of so rich lands and splendid timber." "We will talk of that afterwards

now for the matter in hand. This girl has turned up; with your usual propensity for bad luck you have managed unearth her. I would have paid her to keep out of the way; but here you have allowed her to find out a secret it was your vital interest to guard. She will not keep this secret, even if she could be bribed to do it. Women cannot keep secrets. She has probably a lover whom she is sure to communicate with. Is it not so?" 'Yes, she haf a lover—young Fonte-

noy, of Illysandria." Son of Lafayette Fontenoy. I know his father; he hates me like poison; he would take pleasure in my ruin. That settles the girl's fate! I suppose he young man and his family know in her assumed character. She will have to be exposed, disgraced and her word made of no account. You say she knows there is somebody confined at the top of the tower; does she know or suspect who it is?" "She saw his face at the window. The blind came unfastened with the When I put the meesmeric in-

fluence on her, she say, as answer to my question. 'The face looks like the man they told me was dead."
"That's enough, and too much. She to the penitentiary for manlaughter. Her fate be on your head. fruit of your carelessness! When I gave you that charge I thought you to have no further trouble—I thought—" "You thought I would take such lit-

care that soon t'ere would be no leevin's secret. But I am no murderer, Monsieur Vanhorn; and some constitution are veree tough."

"Well, you want money; you want to go away, and you cannot leave things in the tower as they are. If there should be an investigation and a grave should be opened, a body must be found there, you understand that?" Emile Prudhomme turned a more livid pallor as the sharp, hard, fox-like eyes looked into his. His hand involuntary clinched. It pierced him to the quick to be in subjection to this lower spirit. He had the instincts of honor

spirit. He had the instincts of honor and compassion, and his persistent evil luck had not quite crushed these out. When his interlocutor repeated more emphatically, "You understand that?" he bent his head in acquiescence, but no word escaped his lips.
"Now to business." said Vanhorn. "You say the young woman is here,

and does not suspect that she is to appear in a new role to-night. Call Con-

nolly and show him the way to my lady's chamber !" "First let me see if she is in there, or with my little girl," Dr. Prudhomme said quickly. "Remain you here," he said quickly. "Remain you here," he added, with a peremptory wave to follow head, as Vanhorn seemed about to fol-

low him. "This is my house."

"The old scamp is up to some trick,
I suspect," muttered Vanhorn, looking
after him as he ascended the stairs.
Prudhomme, too, was muttering to
himself—muttering in French as he "This is my house." went up to the study-room in which he

had locked Irma.
"I will tell her there is no hope," he said, "that they are here to arrest her. will make my proposition for the last time. If she agrees, I will slip her off into the secret story of the tower. This they will never search. If she refuses, what then? I will save her all the same—may be; and gratitude—" He suddenly remembered that he did not have the key to the study. It was

on the bunch of keys he had given Nick. He called to the negro in his shrill, sweet falsetto, bidding him come quickly. He heard the shuffling feet oming up the creaking stairs, and he had stopped before the locked door but an instant before the negro appear-

"The keys," Dr. Prudhomme said.
"Why did you not bring them before?
Give them to me." "I ain't got de keys. I ain't had no chance to tell you how de—"
"Where are the keys?" Dr. Prudomme interupted, sternly.
"For de Lor's sake don't look at me De gose got de keys! I

dat way! De ain'e to blame."
"The ghost." "You seed her yourself. You knowed her—she jes' walked outer de picter and folowed me to de door, and says 'Give me dem keys'-and de keys jus' dropped outer my hand like I been "Fool!" cried Dr. Prudhomme. "It was no ghost at all. It was a plot, a trick to get the keys. Burst the door

The squat giant obeyed him. threw his broad shoulder against the loor-once-twice. The door gave way and Dr. Prudhomme entered the room. o his astonishment he found it empty. He lit a candle and searched every nook and recess of the study. He tried the windows and found the blinds still

locked. "You see now what the ghest want with the key," he said to Nick. "The girl is gone!" He rushed down stairs.

"Irma Weir is gone!" he exclaimed, bursting into the sitting room. "Ah, ha! This is your doing. You have let her escape!" cried Vanhorn, springing from his seat.
"It is false! She haf eloped with her

lover-Fontenoy. I had found out their plan. I locked her up, but she have got out, she haf gone with him." "Can't we follow them?" cried Vane, recovering from his amazement. "How long have they been gone?" "Only a little while. She was there

not an hour ago.' "Then follow them, overtake them," caid Vanhorn, gripping the Frenchman's shoulder and hissing in his ear, "or, by the soul of Moses, I will wind you up here in a week's time! Come on," cried Harold. "Show us

the way they went. The night is clear; we can follow them. Order horses at Dr. Prudhomme turned to Nick and directed him to saddle two horses and bring them to the foot of the orchard. "That is the place where they were to meet," he said. "Fontenoy was to

come at seven o'clock. 'Seven o'clock-it is about that time now!" exclaimed Harold. "Yes: she may be just now gone. We may get there before they drive

He hurried out, followed by the There was a bright starlit others. sky overhead, for a crisp wind had swept away the clouds. Dr. Prud-homme and Harold were in the lead. In five minutes they had reached the ot of the orchard. In the shadow of the great trees they saw a vehicle with a large black horse attached. A man od beside the horse. When they ame up to him, he stepped out of the shadow, and stood before them. We want Irma Weir," said the

panting sheriff. Bert Fontenoy looked at him haughtily and did not speak. Where is Irma Weir " asked Dr Bert wheeled upon him fiercely

Yes, where is she ?" he echoed. ask that question of you. It is you who have kept her from coming to me. What right had you to do it?"
"He's just bluffing," interposed the deputy. "The girl is hiding somewhere in these woods. I'll call my dog, and we'll soon have missy at bay.' 'Dog yourself!" cried Bert, indig-

nantly. "I'll teach you to speak with more respect of a lady too good for you to name He caught up his riding-whip and raised it to inflict a blow on the fat shoulders of the deputy. But Vanhorn

caught his arm. "Stop." he said. officer of the law. It is his business to trace and find and take into custody any who have broken that law. Irma Weir has broken it. She is a fugitive from justice. You may as well tell where she is hidden; it will be useless for her to try to escape."
"I have told you I do not know

would tell you? You have no real, whatever legal, right, to arrest Irma "Do you know her story? Has she told it to you?" asked Vane, with

where she is. If I did, do you suppose

'She has told me her story," Bert answered, turning a scornful look on his questioner. "I know, too, the part taken in it by her pretended brother. I know she has done nothing to deserve punishment. A helpless, deceived girl has a right to defend herself against a villian who has trapped her into marlying him by false representations. she is taken, I'll see that she gets justice, if justice is to be had. And I'll ferret out the mystery and jugglery there is in this affair if brains and money and persistence can do it." Vanhorn changed color under the

ung man's fixed, stern look. Then he said hurriedly : This talk is all bosh! Connolly, get to business. Here is your dog. Set him to work. Hi! there comes Old Nick. What is that he is shout-

The cry came to them distinctly now. "Fire! De Grenadier's a-fire!" They turned their eyes in the direction of the tower. Smoke was pouring from the windows of the second Smoke was pouring from the windows of the second story. As they coked, a bright flame licked out its long tongue from one of the windows,

quickly followed by another.
'It is Mort's work! My God! they will both be burned to death," cried Dr. Prudhomme. "They are locked

in his ear. The long nails of the Hebrew printed themselves in the doctor's arm. Then he said aloud "There is no use to try to save the old tower. The dry logs will burn like tinder. The wretched lunatic has already been suffocated.' They were hurrying to the scene of the fire. A weird little figure came

flying to meet them.
"Help her! Save her!" she cried,
running up to Bert. "She is burning

"Yes, Irma; she is up there in the Grenadier's head—in the secret story. I cap't get to her. The second story is

all a-blaze. There! don't you hear the scream? Is it Mort—the crazy hump-back—or is it her? Oh! Christ have mercy upon Irma."
She uttered the broken exclamation as she ran side by side with Bert. Har-

old was close behind. As they neared the tower they saw plainly that nothing could save it from destruction. The wind was rising. The flames were issuing from the windows of the second story. They caught the outer walls and leaped upward

triumphantly. "Look! oh, look!" cried Dusky, pointing up.
At the window, at the top of the

tower, just under its nelmet roof, appeared a face. A cloud of smoke obscured it for an instant, but when this cleared away, they recognized the face of Irma Weir. White and spirit-like looked her face

in the glare and wreathing smoke. She did not cry for help. She did not stretch her arms to those below. She knew they could not help her. No ladder could reach half-way to her. The staircase, the floors and walls beneath her were in flames. She was looking down at the branches of a pecan-tree some feet below her. "Jump; catch the limbs; it is your

only chance!" screamed Dusky.
But she turned away. For a moment she was not seen. The flames leaped higher. One, more greedy, licked the window that had just framed Irma's face. Bert groaned and felt despair in his heart.

"There she is!" some one cried. He uncovered his face and looked up. She was again at the window; but what face was that which showed over her shoulder? Was it a living thing—that ghastly face? Yes, there was life in the hollow eyes. Wild, eager, they show in the strong illumination they shone in the strong illumination. Bony hands were locked tightly around Irma's waist. The skeleton was clinging to her!

'Shake him off! Try to save your-self," shouted Bert. He stood below with outstretched arms in the faint hope of saving her by catching her and breaking the fall. She made no reply. Her white face

was set and determined. She stood in the window. She gathered herself up for a spring down among the branches of the pecan-tree. It was just a chance that she might catch one f these as she went down. The huge trunk of the tree was twenty feet beyond the tower, but some of its boughs extended in the direction of the build-ing reaching to the window and beyond

She raised her eyes in a mute prayer. She spoke to the creature clinging

'Have courage! Hold fast!" those below heard her say. Then she leaped from the window. Her extended hands elutched at the limbs. She missed the first ones; but the leafy boughs half tuoyed her for a second, and she eaught a limb lower down. It bent under the double weight-bent its whole length down, and semeed ready to snap as she swung from it, cling-ing desperately with both hands. Beow her was a larger limb; if she could but reach it with her feet! But no, it was not directly beneath her; it was a little distance beyond. A volume of black smoke poured out from the windows, hiding her for an instant. Those below heard a terrible sound-the cracking of the limb, and a cry of anxious dread escaped their lips. The the half-split bough to steady herself, she planted both feet firmly upon the other, and moved along it a step or two until she reached a fork of the limbs, where she sank down exhausted in the seat thus afforded.

A shout of relief and applause went up from below. Bert did not join in it. He had no breath to spare. Some one had brought a ladder. In an instant Bert had planted it against the tree. Snatching the rope which Dusky had been holding all the while, he sprang up the ladder and began to climb the He drew himself up from limb to limb with the activity of a squirrel, until he reached the one that held Irma, he threw over her a noose of the rope. He drew it around the bodies of the two, and bracing himself against the trunk of the tree, he called to Irma o lower herself from the limb she sat upon and trust to the rope. The smoke and heat were suffocating, the leaves were shriveling around her, but she still had strength and presence of mnid enough to obey him. Holding to the limb, she let herself gently down, and loosening her grasp hung suspended by the rope in the hands of her lover. Carefully he lowered the double weight to the ground nearly forty feet below.

They gathered around them. Dusky, always ready, had a gourd of fresh water, and the scorched and half-fainting girl was revived. The bony hands still clung to her, though their owner was unconscious. He had swooned through the heat and suffocation. It was now seen that she had bound him to her. She had torn a strong strip of the sheet, passed it around his waist and hers and knotted it firmly so that he would not have fallen if his hold had relaxed. Harold quickly unfastened the knot and released Irma. He lifted her in his arms, and half carried, half supported her a little distance away from the smoke and heat of the burning pile. He laid her here on the cool, thick grass, and Dusky sat down by her and bathed her burning face and eyes. Nick followed bearing the rescued man, and laid him

down a few feet in front of Irma. "Is he dead?" she asked anxiously 'No, he has only fainted," said Harold. "At least, I think so, for I feel a feeble pulsation of his heart; but he is the image of death. What is he? Who is he? Skeleton that he is, he has

somehow a familiar look." Irma did not reply. Dusky had gone over to the man and was drenching his face with water. In a little while he revived and looked about him intelligently. He was in truth almost a skeleton. He would not have weighed more than sixty pounds, yet he seemed once to have been a fleshy man, for the skin of his face and neck hung loose and flabby. He wore neat, clean underclothes, but his hair and beard were matted

Bert came up and knelt down by Ir ma, and she lay with half-closed eyes and flushed cheeks, her long hair damp and curling from the water, which Dusky had liberally bestowed upon her face and head. He took her hands and pressed them to his breast. "Brave, strong little hands!" he said.

'My darling is a heroine. Thank God, she is saved " She lifted her eyes to him and smiled. "If you had not come to my help so soon, it would have been all over with us. I could not have held out

after he fainted, he was such a dead "Who is he, Irma? He is the strangest-looking creature I ever saw.' "I do not know who he is. I dare not tell you what I have imagined; you would think me crazy. Go and speak to him. Ask him who he is. Is he conscious?"'

'Yes; he is sitting up. He looks like one just risen from the grave. All but his eyes. They are glowing with life and excitement. He seems to have

roused up from some brain lethargy."
"Where is Dr. Prudhomme?"
Neither he nor Michael Vanhorn was
to be seen. The burly deputy was
standing close by, wiping his steaming
brow. Harold Vane was bending over the recovered man, staring at him with a face full of wild bewilderment. "Who are you?" he burst out at

The hollow eyes turned upon Vane and gazed at him fixedly.

"Who am I?" he said, in a husky, unequal tones. "I don't know—hardly. I used to be Solon Vanhorn."

"Solon Vanhorn! That can't be. Solon Vanhorn is dead! He is buried only a few yards from here."

"Then I must be his ghost. It seems to me I have been dead and buried. But no; I am no ghost. I am a live man—a free man! My head is getting right. My brain is clearing up. Come here, you man. Connolly is your name. You know me. Isn't my name Van-You know me. Isn't my name Van-horn? Am I Solon Vanhorn, or am

I not?"

"I'm blessed if you tin't Solon and nobody else! I know that nose! But you've been through the rubbers, old man; blamed if you an't. You look used up. Alive! And we huntin' up your murderer. Where's Michael? He'll be dumbfounded and overjoyed at this queer turning out!"

"Oh, ho! No doubt he will," chuckled the skeleton. "Grieved mightily over my death, did le Was keen

ily over my death, did le Was keen in hunting up my murterer, was he? Bring him to me and by me embrace him and take him into partnership!" The sardonic grin on his skinny face was ghastly to see. Harold understood it, though the dul-witted deputy He understood that Michael Vanhorn had kept his brother in secret confinement and reported his death that he might get possession of his property. He had confidently expected Solon Vanhorn's death to take place. The wound and the fever that followed had weakened him to a child in mind and body. But he had lived. His strong constitution had triumphed. Would he expose his brother? Harold wondered. He knew the Hebrew clannishness—their jeabusy of outside scrutiny and interference—their reluctance to expose to alien eyes any

place within the pale of sect. This feeling would be stronger than fraternal regard or family pride. tested him by a question. "What was your motive for this strange piece of deception, Mr. Van-

of the wrong-doings that might take

The resurrected man turned his eyes sharply upon him. "That is my business," he said, with ne old asperity. "I had reasons asperity. private reasons. Michael, skulking in the shadow be-

hind the bushes, heard these words and was reassured. Solon still had his eyes upon Vane. "Who are you?" he asked presently. "I am the detective employed by your brother to hunt for Irma Weir

'Irma Weir? Where is she? was Irma Weir that saved me to-night. I knew her face, I knew her voice. She was there close by. She had which supported the tower. heard every word. She felt no strong Her life had been shock of surprise. so strange that strange things seemed less wonderful to her than to another. But she felt happier than she had ever felt before. The load of blood-guilti-ness was lifted from her. She had expiated that impulsive deed. She had

saved the life of the man she had in-jured—the man who had wronged her. Her hand thrilled in her lover's; her beaming eyes sought his. He returned the look with one of deepest tenderness. He tried to make it happy as well, but there was anxious doubt in his mind. He felt that she did not share it. In her joyful relief at finding herself free of the fetr that had so long weighed upon her, she did not feel smoke cleared away. She was seen that now, since Solon Vanhorn was boldly to swing herself by the breaking limb until her feet touched and clung to the larger limb. Still cling-limb ance of life, could not feel the stringency of social laws and their power to set aside the laws of nature and the dictates of the heart. She could not realize that it was possible for her to belong in body to one man, while her

> lenged to another. 'Irma, come here.' She heard the feeble call and looked at Bert. He helped her to rise, and leaning on his arm, she approached Solon Vanhorn and stood before him.

whole spiritual and emotional self be-

He held out his hand to her and she took the bony fingers that closed over hers. "Irma, I knew you," he said. "You are a brave girl. You saved my life."
"Will you let it atone for—for what

For that thrust in my throat ? See what a scar it left. And the fever, and the burying alive in that old cock. loft that's burning now-I owe it all to you. But I'll forgive it. You'll make up to me now, and in the future. We will outwit the ones that wanted

me to be dead, with no child to be my He smiled. Irma shuddered and tried to draw her hand from his grasp. But e skeleton fingers tightened upon it. Yes, I'll forgive that thrust," "It was just a love lick-wasn't it? You were shy about being kissed

soon and before the priest and the others ; I ought to have waited." He was feeble and emaciated. He coked like an effigy of Death in the lurid glare of the burning tower, but his small, pig-like eyes gloated on the girl's beauty as she stood before him, flushed and bright-eyed.

'Yes; I ought to have waited before I kissed my little wife."
"Wife!" Irma wrenched her hand from his clutch, and sprang back as though she had heard a snake hiss under her feet. "Your wife? No, I am not that, I will not be that!"

"You can't help yourself, my beau-You are my legal, married wife. You have saved your husband's life, and he forgives you and takes you back. He claims you, and you can not

free yourself from his claim.' "Bert, is this true?" She fixed a trembling, appealing look upon her lever. He pressed her hand in silence and turned hastily to Vanhorn. "You will not surely prefer such a claim under the circumstances?" he

"Circumstances! What circum stances, youngster ?" "First, her marriage with you was no true marriage. You deceived her, you made false representations.' "I say it was a true marriage. She was of legal age, she was willing to marry me. She did marry me of her. own free will. I made no false representations. What her father may have

said or written to influence her I do

not know or care. It is not to the

point. She is my lawful wife, and I mean to claim her and hold to her. What other word have you to say against it?" This-that she does not love you You are repugnant to her. She has shown you that; she loves another man. He was to have been her hus-

band to-night !" "Ah, ha! That's the way the wind blows, is it? You mean yourself. Well, if I have come to life in time to save her from having such a whipper-snapper for a husband, I've done her a good turn. Who are you anyhow?" good turn. Who are you, anyhow?"
"I am Bertrand Fontenoy, son of Lafayette Fontenoy, who knows you,

wife, Bertrand Fontency, now and for-He raised his skinny arm and shook his clenched hand at the young man. Bert would have drawn closer to Irma, but shook her nead, and moved a

Yes, I know him; I have cause to

And I hate him! Stand off from my

little way from his side.

Vanhorn turned to Connolly.

"I'm tired talking," he said, gaspingly. "I'm weak—very weak; but I'll get strength. Yes; I'll get strong, if I can get to the city. How did you come up?" "On a boat—the little 'Bayou Belle.' She has gone on a few miles further

up the bayou. She will be back in an "I will go down on her. See here. take passage on the boat for me and my wife. Help me to get on board. Stay by me, and take care of me until I am in my own house in New Orleans, and I will pay you well. You shall have a check for two hundred dollars

as soon as I am at home." "I'll do it," said the deputy. "Can't I help you in out of the night-air?" No; I'll not go inside any walls on this place. I've had enough of them. I'll lie here until we are ready to go on board. Go and get your things to-gether, Mrs. Vanhorn, and be ready to start. I think I can take a nap lying here. The roar of the fire burning that cursed old trap is a good

lullaby." He turned over and shut his eyes, Bert led Irma away. Harold watched them as they moved off. Disappointed and jealous as he was, he could not help pitying the girl for the white misery he saw in her face. But she was calm and tearless. She said to

"If it must be, we will have to bear it-the separation. I will go on the boat to-night, for I want to get away from this place. But I will not go as his wife. I will never be his wife. I will never live with him, or take any of his money. I will love you alwaysyou only, and I will wait. Perhaps some way may be opened for us. We must be patient."

'Not if I can find any way to break that unholy bond. It is no marriage," he said, bitterly. "All the time, all the money I can command shall be given to that end."

"I fear you will only waste your time and money, dearest," she said, sadly. "I do not know about such things, but money seems to go such a great way in the world, and he has so much of it He can work against us. and bring everything to his side. Then his will is so strong-even now, when he is so weak in body. You must not let me blight and cramp your life.

A loud, crashing noise broke in upon her words. The roof of the tower had fallen in, amid dense clouds of smoke and an ascending fountain of fiery sparks. A shout went up from the negroes who had flocked up from the quarter, and stood in groups, watching the progress of the fire, the red light weirdly illumining their dark faces.

"De Grannydear's head done gone!" they exclaimed. "I heard de humpback scream," said another. warn't he. He done dead long ago.
'Twas de ghos'. I seed de ghos' through
de smoke.' "De Grannydear's still a standin' on his legs," cried one, alluding to the four large cypress pillars

These were still unconsumed, though the flames had now fastened upon them, and the ivy that muffled them shriveled and dropped away. One after another of the stout, tall posts was wreathed in flames; the headless body of the Grenadier tottered, and the burning mass toppled and

fell over with an echoing crash. Dr. Prudhomme stood and watched the flaming tower until it fell to the ground a flery ruin; then he walked away in the direction of the bayou. He stood on the bank, looking down on the dark tide below. Was he contemplating a suicidal plunge in its depths? His face was gloomy and hopeless enough, as seen in the fading gleam of the consuming pile. He, too, had played a desperate game and lest, and his nature was far more sensitive and less hardened than Michael Vanhorn's,

The sweet voice was shrill and piercing with pain and terror. It was a passionate, pathetic appeal.

He turned toward the house. A swift change passed over his dark face. His features worked with emotion.
"My child! My poor, helpless one!"
he muttered, "I must live for her. I have beggared her. I must live to work for her !"

Two hours later, the "Bayou Belle" blew her wheezy whistle, moved out from the landing, and turned her head down-stream. Besides her crew, captain, and clerk, she had six passengers. Three of them were the men who had stepped from her lower deck at Prudhomme's Landing, a few hours before; the other three were Solon Vanhorn, his wife, and her

dark dressing-gown, was carried down and laid in the best berth the boat afforded. The two brothers had had a short private interview and come to an understanding, it seemed. The appearance of Solon Vanhorn, coming as from the grave, excited the profound amazement of the captain and clerk of the "Belle."

attendant. Solon Vanhorn, in a neat,

"What the deuce does it mean?" the former asked of Michael. He shrugged his shoulders. 'I can't tell you myself," he said. It is just one of Solon's eccentric freaks. You know he was always odd. He seems to have wanted to appear as dead, that he might see what sort of sensation it would make. Then it would bring his creditors to terms without his having to press them him-self. Yes; always Solon was queer. It

was a cranky notion that, of marrying a young savage from these wilds.' You mean the girl that stabbed him on her wedding-day? Is that the same girl-she that's down below now, not in his state-room, though? She asked me to give her another room. not the woman that tried to kill him ?" The same. It turns out it was a sort of accident. They made up, and here they have been hiding up here, having their honey-moon, while we thought them in the other world." "Well, I must say he doesn't look

much like a bride-groom." 'No; he's been struggling with man larial fever, and it nearly got the better

of him."
"And she—I declare she looks even less like a bride than he like a groom. She's got a sweet face, but it's powerful sad-looking. I thought that tall, good-looking chap who came aboard with her was her sweetheart. They took a sorrowful leave of one another. And I'm blessed if yonder he isn't standing on the bank where we left him, lantern in hand, watching the lights of the boat !"

Two hours after the "Belle" left the landing at Prudhomme Place-no longer the Grenadier—she struck a snag while rounding a bend in the bayou, and damaged her wheel. The injury was temporarily remedied, but the boat made slow progress, and the captain expressed his intention to stop for repairs at the first available place on

It was eight o'clock next morning when they came in sight of the low roofs, and the solitary church spire of little town twenty miles below the mouth of the bayou. Irma recognized it as the same town at which she had stopped when a fugitive, where she had sold her skiff and taken passage on a

A large boat now lay puffing at the wharf, taking on a load of wood and discharging freight. The passengers of the "Belle" were transferred to this boat. Connolly took careful charge of the invalid, and Solon's wasted frame soon reposed in the luxurious "bridal chamber." Irma and Dusky had a chamber." Irma and Dusky had a comfortable room assigned them. Dusky, neatly dressed in a dark-blue serge gown, and a sleeveless crimson sack, with a brown, rough straw poke on her curly head, looked like a little Italian peasant.

To be Continued.

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