was a still greater one now. The indolent blue eyes were dark with life and anger, and there was no drawl in the ringing tones which she heard.

"You infernal cur! How dare you lay your dirty hands on a lady? Poaching again, too! I'll see that you are sent where you belong, this time!" Then Darcy turned to the pale and trembling woman behind him. Before he spoke he found time to think that she looked lovely in her agitation. "Miss Dysart, it is very fortunate that I was behind—I mean near you," he confusedly corrected himself, as she suddenly opened her eyes very wide.

"But this is no place for you now," he continued, "so please—" He had been standing with his back to the man he had thrown, and seemed to have entirely forgotten his presence; but even as he was speaking, the thoroughly enraged Dobbs sprang upon him with a fearful oath. Lena's first impulse was to run for help, but she seemed rooted to the spot with fear. With hands so tightly clasped that the finger-nails hurt her flesh, she stood and watched the struggle which ensued. But it was a decidedly short one. With incredible quickness the man was twisted around in front of his apparently frail antagonist, and a moment later, Lena Dysart saw the burly fellow lifted bodily from his feet, and hurled to the ground with sickening force. Then everything seemed to swim rapidly around before her eyes, and the last thing of which she was conscious was Jack's strong arms about her, and his "Lena, darling," sounding tender and far away. When she opened her eyes, a few minutes later, she found herself bolstered up against a tree, with Jack's coat beneath her head, and Jack himself tightly clasping one of her hands, while his gaze was anxiously fixed on the still prostrate man before him. For a moment she did not move; she did not seem to care to. In a way which she did not try to explain, she felt a strange sense of happiness and content, as she gazed into his averted face. How tightly he held her hand. She felt a tender little thrill in her heart, and voluntarily the little fingers closed softly over the stronger ones which clasped them. Instantly he turned, and the anxious expression gave way to one of gladness, and the pale face flushed perceptibly, as a quick sigh of relief came from his lips. "Lena—Miss Dysart, you are not hurt?" he asked quickly, rising to his feet.

"No, Jack," she replied, at the same time smilingly holding out her hands to him, to be helped also to a more dignified position. She could feel the strong hands tremble as they clasped hers, and for a moment, as he lifted her, his face was dangerously near to hers, and she grew rosy red under his earnest gaze.

"Jack! She had called him Jack! How dangerously sweet it was. For a moment it seemed to him that he could not resist taking her in his arms, and making her listen to him. But he was suddenly brought to his senses by her withdrawing her hands from his, as if she half divined his intention. "No, I was not hurt," she repeated, "but I was so frightened; and that man—" She caught her breath in an expressive way. This had the effect of recalling Darcy's mind to the rather doubtful existence of the man lying so white and still upon the dead leaves. With a swift look into her face, he went and knelt down beside the prostrate form. Even as he did so the fellow stirred uneasily, and then feebly lifted himself upon his elbow and stared about in a bewildered fashion. His eyes rested on Darcy with a peculiar mixture of hatred and wonder in their depths. Darcy spoke to him, and his voice resumed its accustomed slow drawl. "By Jove, my good fellow," he said, "I didn't mean exactly to throw you so hard, you know; but," —and his face became very serious in its expression,—"Dobbs, this is a bad job for you. I shall let the law take its course with you this time. You impose on my good nature; and even if I should overlook the poaching, your cowardly attack on a lady requires punishment."