being quite out of keeping with the general appearance of the man, were the hands, which were soft and delicate, and of such size and shape as to suggest gentle blood. The shapely and carefully trimmed nails precluded the possibility of any laborious occupation, such as his dress would indicate. I had scarcely time to note what I have recorded when his eyes opened, and he raised himself into a sitting posture, regarding me the while with anxious curiosity. After a pause which seemed of intolerable length, his lips moved, and throwing his arms wildly about him, he shrieked: "Why didn't you kill me? Why did you not extinguish this wretched life, which can only be torture to its possessor,—yes, torture, with no hope of remedy or relief?" There was no mistaking the language of distress, accented in the tone of voice, and written in the agonizing yet appealing expression of the eye. This was neither the stealthy gaze of the would-be murderer, nor the maniacal glare of the lunatic.

Feeling quite secure in the superiority of my physical vigor, and relying a little also, perhaps, on my familiarity with firearms, I replied to him with equanimity. I charged him with attempting to murder me for some unknown reasons, and assured him if he had suffered injury at my hands in consequence of my efforts to defend myself, that he was alone responsible for it.

He put his hand to his head in a mechanical fashion, and finding blood as he withdrew it, said, "It matters little; would to Heaven the wound were mortal!"

A strange somnolence suddenly appeared to overpower him. He attempted to resist, but it was of no avail. "I shall awake presently, and will tell you all," he said, as the deep lethargy stole over him. While he slept I waited and watched, noting the heavy breathing, interrupted by fitful gasps, the convulsive twitching of face and of limbs, and indulging in endless conjecture as to the history of the unfortunate being. My watch was a long and a weary one. I paced a dreary stretch of ground, the prostrate form of my antagonist always in sight, and found great relief to the nervous strain in the company of my cigar. Amid so much that savored of the unnatural and the horrible, its steady glow seemed cheery and reassuring.

But the awaking came at last, and came like a natural and gradual arousing from a deep slumber. Raising himself on his elbow, he glanced curiously about him, until his eyes fell upon me. Evidently he had, but for this, forgotten his murderous and unprovoked assault. After a few moments' silence he noted that there were indications of a heavy storm, and said that at a distance of only a few minutes' walk he had a habitation which would give us shelter and warmth. He added that he could not be surprised, after what had occurred, should I decline to accept his hospitality, saying that although there was no excuse to be offered, he was yet innocent of any evil purpose, and was an unfortunate, who should be pitied, as one upon whom the hand of God had borne heavily. Of course it was the maddest thing a man ever did, but I was fond of adventure, and wanted to see the thing out. Besides, I had the confidence of youth and of superior strength, so I went. Our walk led through woodland where the growth became denser as we proceeded, until, quite in the depths of the forest, we paused before a weather-beaten, dilapidated frame building. I was too much upon my guard against a sudden surprise to notice much as we entered the house.

We passed through a few rude, bare rooms below, and then ascended a flight of stairs and entered a spacious and inviting room, with all the appliances of comfort which should be found in a gentleman's sitting-room. The indications of refined taste were evinced in all its appointments, from the soft, heavy rugs upon the floor, to the choice prints upon the walls, and the shelves of books that filled every possible space and overflowed upon table and floor.