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aided; but the great list of the tree assisted its own destruction more than half a dozen keen axes could have done. Its dragging weight served to enlarge the wound the Prussian was gashing low down in the massive trunk. And as the giant swung heavily under the buffets of the wind that drowned the blows of the ax, and its fibers strained and broke, so deep groans broke from it, the sounds that had troubled d'Ormonde,—the rending cries of this mass of timber which felt its foundation threatened, the snapping of its muscles, its wordless, deep-toned sighs of anguish.

And beyond doubt the monster would fall direct upon the house roof, upon the tiled roof of the upper room where Dagobert and his wolves and Madame Desroches were. Joists and beams of the old house would crash in under that mighty impact like so much tinder. The Uhlan was helping himself to a terrible revenge.

WITH a cry as of a wild beast Antoine flew at the miscreant. Taken by surprise, the Prussian jumped back, aimed a wild and ineffectual blow with his axe, dropped it, and fled like a hare.

For a moment Antoine almost had him; but the Uhlan was the faster sprinter, and he made a gap of half a dozen yards between him and the pursuer. He had discarded his long coat. His spurs rattled as he pounded along, running as he had never run before. He could hear the hoarse breathing of his enemy, and he felt horribly afraid. He cast a wild glance round about him. The flood of moonlight put concealment out of the matter. He renewed his efforts, making straight for the church on the ridge, as if he hoped to find sanctuary there.

It was a semicircular church, noted for its ancient frescoes and the height and beauty of its great crocketed spire. The Prussian did not dwell on these points of adornment. He leaped a wall of flints, caught sight of a wooden door under a low Norman arch, and hurled his bulk against it. If the portal had been secured, its massive oak, old as the wars of the Fronde, would have flung him back with a smashed shoulder. But it was unbolted; and the German reeled in and fell headlong upon the stone floor of a tiny chapel.

He jerked himself up and rushed to slam the door; but Antoine flew in like a whirlwind. He dashed past the other, who was behind the door, and for an instant lost sight of him.

"Come out, Coquin!"
 The Prussian edged away, and in so doing revealed himself. Antoine dashed at him, caught his toes in a loose slab, and rolled over and over.

The Prussian darted from the chapel and tried to slink along one of the walls of the nave, cursing the ruddy tinted masonry that poured through a transept painted window.

"I see you, Scoundrel!" howled Antoine, who could do nothing of the sort.

The other made a bolt for the shadow, and once more showed himself. He ran into a second bay in the nave, a semicircular recess in which was a tomb of white marble, with a stone warrior recumbent, holding a long sword from his breast to his feet. For a moment the Prussian seemed to be trapped; but he caught sight of a dark opening in the curved wall and dashed in. He found himself on an extremely narrow stairway which went winding up into pitch blackness, icy cold. And without pausing to think he began to ascend as best he could, barking his shins, falling on his face, gasping and swearing, and all the time hearing his pursuer clamoring after him, relentless, determined.

He was on the stairway built in the wall that led to the roof of the tower. He emerged upon this roof at last. From its center rose the spire, octagonal, of white stone, with cutting crockets at spaces of about four feet. He cast a wild glance up the tapering height of the steeple, which seemed to go up into heaven, into a fearful abyss of empty air. There was not much space between the side of the spire and the bartimented wall of the tower, with its three-foot parapet and massive coping. He ran round the space, and came at once upon the low wooden door that admitted him to the inside of the column. He thrust his way in just as Antoine emerged upon the roof.

FOR a fraction of a second the Uhlan meditated a fight with his bogged foe; but his weapons had been taken away at headquarters, and Antoine was a young giant, no doubt armed. With a sound between a sob and a curse, the German set his back against the flimsy door, only to relinquish the idea a moment later and make a dash for the first of a series of railors, clamped to the inside wall of the spire, which ran up perhaps the length of the shaft.

Up he went, hand over hand. Where the

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