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on the level ground behind the groyne, a little after sunrise, with a stretcher, his man and a local surgeon. You expect no serious injury?'

'No, a pierced shoulder at the most.'

'Very well, let us look at our patient & perhaps operate at once, even at the cost of landing him until the exercise is over.'

In fact, although the operation went perfectly well, the man Haines was landed at the Admiral's particular request on these grounds: first that it stood to reason some gun or other would burst or overset, and second, that the roaring of broadsides would arouse his feeling and excite the blood; whereas on shore he would be perfectly calm and rest under Mrs Aubrey's and Mrs Wood's care.

But the Admiral was worried, very much was worried, by his nephew's absence in the morning, and by the rumours brought by the Admiral's secretary that Miller had flatly refused to fight with swords. He would pistol or he would not fight. Maturin's seconds would have none of it: it was their principal who had been struck -- it was he who chose the weapons. That was always the case: it always had been the case. It was the Law of Moses.

'Of course it is,' said the Admiral. 'I always preferred the gentleman's weapon ~~who~~ [when] I went out: except when I was the aggressor and had to take the other man's choice. Pray, Mr. Martin,' he went on, 'pray run out & see if you can catch them. Tell him privately from me that if he don't fight he is disgraced for ever & can expect no notice from me -- no[r] from the Ministry. And tell ~~me~~ [him] a sword wound given by a reasonably decent creature is not so wicked, particularly if you dress it with marshmall and heartsease.'

On the field, from which the few venal onlookers had been shooed with appalling violence, the scene was only just not ridiculous. Miller had been urged forward by his seconds and he kept telling them that it was perfectly unfair -- he knew everything about pistols: he would meet any man with a pistol. But he knew nothing about swords