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MARION'S OATH!

A Tale of the Revolution.

BY CHAR. J. FETTERMAN.

(CONCLUDED.)

There is something impressively still and refreshing in an old, deserted road, winding through a cool pine forest. The tall trees, leaning overhead, the thick carpet of splintering leaves below, and the delicious fragrance all around, have always had a charm for me, and Preston felt it so, especially after the fierce excitement of that life and death struggle; so that when he came to a little dark stream, gliding softly across the road, he longed to stop and bathe his throbbing temples, and take one long, sweet draught, as he had often done upon a hot day in the forest when a boy. But the red fox was close behind him, and he shot on like an arrow.

Preston felt he came to an old clearing, which had long been abandoned. Here, for about a quarter of a mile, was an open space where ploughed fields had once been, but the furrows of which now were overgrown with dry, stunted grass. He would have preferred the winding, forest road, but there was no alternative, and on he dashed. He had nearly regained the shelter of the forest on the other side, when he heard a wild burst of cheering, and looking back, he saw the dragons, with Major Lindsay and one other in advance, entering on the open space. They had caught sight of him for the first time since he entered the old road, and their shouts betokened renewed hope and determination on their part.

Breathlessly Preston kept on, but with less assurance than before, for his horse was already hard worked, and he soon saw with dismay that blood was flowing from his forehead freely from a wound. A half mile farther on the poor animal began to flag sensibly; yet, cruel as it seemed, and much as it pained his own generous nature, Preston was forced to urge on the dying steed. He knew that at the distance of a mile and a half ahead there was a swamp, into the recesses of which, if he could once plunge, he would be safe. But now he heard behind him a rapid hoarse and near the trooper had risen in his stirrups, broadsword in hand. Preston had no such weapon. Suddenly he recollected the pistol in his other holster, and drawing it out with the velocity of thought, he turned half around in his saddle and fired. With an unerring aim the ball entered the brain of the dragon, who fell dead to the earth.

It was the work of a moment to leap to the ground and catch the fallen soldier's horse, which Preston sprang. Poor Thurston, already dead, he had sunk to the earth in his master's last shot.

Thus fate intervened to prevent an interview between Preston and our heroine, at a time when it would have been of incalculable advantage to both, and have circumvented a plot as base and cruel as it was now certain of success. As the very hour when Preston, after having ridden over thirty miles from the spot where he was attacked, threw himself wearily from his horse, in one of the most secret recesses of the forest, Kate and her aunt were setting forth for Georgetown, where they arrived on the succeeding day.

Never was human creature in a more isolated and mournful situation than Kate now found herself. Indulging in what she thought a hopeless passion, every moment of delicate forbade her revealing it to those who could alone benefit her. She well knew that if her father became aware how much her marriage with Major Lindsay was against her inclinations, he would interpose even at the very altar, and ascend the scaffold to save her. Neither would it do to let her aunt guess the inharmoniousness at this union. Both her father and Mrs. Blakeley had, indeed, at one time hoped that a matrimonial connection would be formed between her and Preston, but the mutual coldness of the parties had long since dissipated this expectation. It was no time now to reveal her secret preference, such a confession would have only sealed her father's fate without rendering her happy. Kate was forced, therefore, to wear a smiling face, when her heart was lacerated.

As Major Lindsay was compelled to be at Camden in six days, his leave of absence closing at that period, the marriage was fixed for the evening before his departure. This was an earlier day than Kate had looked for, but she could not object without exposing her secret. They submitted therefore in silence.

But who can tell the agony of her spirit, when in company with her aunt and parent she was forced to wear a smiling aspect, yet when alone she gave free vent to her sorrow. The images of Preston often intruded on those bitter moments. Alas! that one so young should be so miserable. She could have prayed for death but that it would have been a boon to her.

CHAPTER VII.

Our friends in the good greenwood, Oh, the heart, the heart what a mystery lies. There are blows worse than those that come with a wheel, it is when a gay heart is broken with anguish.

Its glades of reedy grass, its safe and silent islands Within the dark morass.

SONG OF MARION'S MAN.

It was several days after the events of the last chapter, and the scene was one of wild and woodland beauty. Huge cypresses rose on every hand, festooned with parasitic plants; broad glades opened here and there in all directions, green and vaulted like a Gothic interior. It was just such a spot as Robin Hood might have chosen in old Sherwood. Here were knarled monarchs of the forest which had braved the lightning and the storms of a thousand years; here were natural bowers, formed by the interlacing branches of the trees, such as fair Rosamond might have been sheltered in; here were vines, drooping from the huge branches, like curtains, or hanging in festoons across the way, like the draped banners of a mighty host. The whole scene was full of picturesque beauty. And the effect was heightened by fires, which glimmered here and there between the trees, cast wild and flickering shadows along the road, and gave the prospect the air of an enchanted forest. Fragrant plants filled the evening atmosphere with delicious perfume—the laurel, the shrub, and more exquisite than all, the sweet-scented jessamine.

This, as the reader may have imagined, was Marion's celebrated camp at Snow Island. It was a place of high river swamp, nearly altogether enclosed by water, and defended by its natural position from surprise and siege alike. Here, after his attacks, he was accustomed to retire and recruit his men, exhausted by long and rapid marches, often sixty miles a day, which they frequently made. Perhaps the great secret of this renowned partisan's success, next to his indomitable courage, which reminds us of that knight of chivalry, was the care which he took to give his followers sufficient rest between his enterprises. His maxim was to lie low and feed high until the hour came to strike; but then his motions were as rapid, and the blow he struck as decisive as the thunderbolt.

The present occasion was one of those on which his men, having returned from a successful expedition, were resigning themselves like true soldiers, to the pleasure of the moment. The sentinels were indeed posted at the outskirts; but inside the camp was universal ease and song. The reins of discipline seemed for the time to have been relaxed. The different messes were gathered together over their meals; the cheerful cup circulated from hand to hand; and many a merry jest was told, or lyric of war or love was sung by those jovial bon companions.

One of those groups seemed even more merry than the rest. It was composed of about a dozen men, prominent among whom was Preston's sergeant, Macdonald, who acted as the director of the ceremonies for the time being, and saw especially to the circulation of the cup.

"Keep it up, boys," he said, handing around the bottle, "isn't it often we get such red old stuff as this, for it is not every day we have the riding of a rich Tory's cellar, as we had last week. A short life and a merry one is my motto. Hello! my excellent friend Jacob, why don't you drink? You needn't shy showing us your teeth all the time, tho' they are so handsome. Comrades, here's the health of Jacob Snow—that's you, my old chap, I suppose—he serves as pretty a mistress as there is in the thirteen colonies, and boasts a shin bone that curves like a reaping hook, Jacob Snow, a sander, egad!"

"Lor, Massa Macdonald, I'm deeply obliged for dis honor," said the old butler, for it was indeed he. "I am really disappointed for to see a man disstrast my feelings, here he laid his hands on his belly."

"That's it—blaze away, old fellow," said the sergeant, slapping him on the back. "I know you could talk as glib as a parson. So you were at Mrs. Blakeley's when we were before that place, were you? You remember my sending in for my baggage?"

"Gor Almighty, yes!" said old Jacob full of reverential admiration. "And you'd see dis gentleman too dat shot Lieutenant Torriano dat made 'em furious. Major Lindsay said you were an Injua and no better dan a cannon ball—he, yes!"

"Hal hal! a cannibal, you mean my old brave, I suppose. But that biting of the tongue, and a trifle to the way I served Major Gainer, wasn't it, lad?"

"Ay, was it!" echoed half a dozen voices. "Tell it to him—tell it!"

"Shall I?" said the sergeant, addressing old Jacob with something of drunken gravity; for the whole party, by this time, had done ample justice to their flagons.

Old Jacob nodded, and Macdonald began. "Well, then you must know, my jolly old blade—but fill your cup again, and drink perdition to the Englishmen—that a party of us had a brush down at Georgetown, not long ago, with some of the British regulars, who were killing beavers at White's bridge. We soon whipped the red coats, and chased them towards the town. But their friends there, hearing the firing, came swarming out like bees, and so we went at it again, hip and thigh as the good book says, and for a while it was the toss of a six pence, which would win. We fought a pretty smart bit of the day; but at last the red coats gave ground again. I had not noticed among them an officer whom I took for Major Gainer, a fellow that had the impudence to boast he'd carry Marion a prisoner on his saddle into Georgetown; and so I singled him out, resolving to try his pluck and comb him down a spell. But no sooner did he see me, coming down on black Bess, than he clapped spurs to his horse—and a cursed good one it was—and made straight for the town, like an old woman who sees a mad dog. Down the road we went, clattering and thundering; but devil a bit for a long while could I gain on the Major. I might have cut down half a dozen strapping fellows as I dashed along, but I had made up my mind to have nothing shot of the leader himself. Old Black Bess did wonders that day! The trees and fence shot past as if running a race. The major's blooded horse went as I never saw a beast go before, but I was close behind, and beginning to gain on him. We were now almost

at the entrance of Georgetown. Still I held on, whooping to old Bess like a mad devil, as I was. Just as I reached Richmond fence, I lapped the quarter of the major's horse, and with a lunge ran my bayonet into his back. The major had turned round, frightened half to death, lifting up his hands in supplication, and I was mad enough to have lost him, yet I could not help laughing as I saw him go down the streets of Georgetown, the bayonet still sticking in him, like a skewer into a tressed fowl; I hauled up, and came off safe; and that's the last that we've heard of Major Gainer."

With narratives like these the night passed; the old butler listening with open mouth and ears. At length, toward midnight the tread of a horse's feet was heard, and a few minutes after, a clear, commanding voice called Macdonald by name.

"The captain, by the Lord!" exclaimed the sergeant, jumping as if struck by an electric shock. "Here he is at last, alive and sound, which I began to fear for. Huzza! But stop. Stand up like a man, as I do, and don't away about like a pine tree in a hurricane. Captain, this gentleman," continued the speaker, his voice getting thicker and thicker, "has a message for you from Miss Mowbray, but he is too cursed drunk to know it."

At these words our hero, who was regarding the group with a look of silent rebuke, turned suddenly on the old butler, who was it truth must be told, the only sober one of the party. A flash of joy lit up Capt. Preston's face as he extended his hand for the supposed letter. Old Jacob, who had no misgiving of that character to deliver, but who had come wholly on his own responsibility, hesitated what to say. While the two parties are thus regarding each other, we will explain the incidents which had brought them thus unexpectedly together.

Capt. Preston had found great difficulty in regaining the camp in consequence of Major Lindsay having left word with him, where he had sought refuge with some Tories in the neighborhood. These men anxious to secure so redoubtable a leader, had immediately stationed patrols at all the usual outlets of the swamp, and thus twice had our hero been driven back into its recesses, only narrowly escaping death. At length, however, in the dead of night, he had succeeded in eluding his enemies and gained the high-road. His flight, however, had led him into a district full of Tories, and he was forced to travel with great caution, and make a long circuit, in order to return to the camp. Meantime his absence there had occasioned much alarm, especially among his troop; and Macdonald had intended, if he did not appear by the ensuing morning, setting forth to make inquiries respecting him, fearing he was dead.

The old butler had been in the camp two days. He had attended his mistress to Georgetown, and was the only one who suspected the true state of Kate's health. He loved that fair creature with the blind devotion a dog shows to his master; and he had long been fully satisfied that her affections were given to Preston. Of a former he had some such idea as the old romances had of a Paladin of former days, looking on him as capable of doing any deed, no matter how impossible. To old Jacob it seemed only necessary that Preston should know of Kate's danger to rescue her. Accordingly, when he found the marriage actually resolved on and the day fixed, he secretly left Georgetown, and made the best of his way to the camp of Marion.

Here the news of Preston's absence fell on him like a thunder-bolt. But he knew that no one else could assist; and moreover he held Kate's secret too sacred to be imparted to others. Meantime, he found amusement in listening to the tales of the soldiers, and he was never happier than when, with mouth wide open he sat devouring some story of the war. He implicitly believed every thing he heard, and thought with humble vanity that a sensation he would create in the kitchen of Blakeley Hall, when he rehearsed these tales; for Jacob in his lowly way, was a sort of Froissart, and, with the unobscured old canon, thought nothing so "honorable and glorious as gallant feats of arms."

Preston now drew the butler aside and said: "Have you the letter here?"

"Please, massa," said the old fellow, determined to blunt through the business what a round falsehood, since he could think of nothing else just then that would serve his turn. "Please, massa, dat was a cursed lie from Sergeant Macdonald—I nether had a letter from Miss Kate, but I had a lily message from her. She is in Georgetown, in a plemic—either she must marry Major Lindsay, or Mr. Mowbray be hung."

"Great God!" exclaimed Preston, "what is it you say? Trifle not with me," he said sternly, seeing the slave by the collar.

"As true as dare is a heaven above," said the old butler trembling, and half frightened out of his wits; "what I say is de Gospel truth."

ent it is already too late—she is lost forever." He turned his face, tortured with anguish up to the moon, which was sailing full and bright, through the blue depths of air. How calm and unruffled was that silvery planet! Ages ago it had shown thus, equally cold and un sympathizing. It had seen the sacrifice of Jephtha's daughter; it had beheld the fugitive Pompey; it had gazed on Zenobia when a crownless queen; it had looked down on pestilence, and war, and human misery in every shape—and still it held on its course, with the same cold, unfeeling orb, mocking at man and his agony. Preston turned away and groaned aloud. Heaven as well as earth seemed to him without hope.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Now by your marble heaven, In the due reverence of a secret vow, I here engage my words."

Oswell.

We left Preston tortured with the reflection that the news of Kate's peril had come too late. Half insane with the thought, he strode to and fro in his marquee. Suddenly an orderly appeared at the door requested our hero's presence at head quarters, where a council of officers was to be immediately held.

Wondering what enterprise called them together, fearful lest duty would prevent his obtaining the furlough which he intended to ask, in order that he might save Kate, or at least die in the attempt, he walked moodily to the tent of Marion. Here he found the leading captains of the brigade already assembled late as was the hour; and beside them Col. Lee, who had just joined Marion with his regiment, subsequently so celebrated in that part of our history.

"I believe Capt. Preston is the last one expected—I on glad to see him safely returned," said Marion, when our hero, having bowed to his brother officers, had assumed a seat, "and, as the affair on which we have met is urgent, we will proceed at once to business. Capt. Horry, will you state the purpose of this assembly, after that we will listen to all, beginning with Capt. Preston, who is the youngest."

Every eye, as he spoke, had been turned on Marion; and as hitherto we have given no description of this celebrated personage, we will employ the interval in drawing his picture. Marion, at that time, was about forty-eight years old; small of stature, swarthy in visage, and having a face crossed by many lines of thought. Without being positively stern in aspect, there was a hard expression in his countenance, which at first might seem to augur a boe on equally as hard; but Marion was, in reality, a man of a singularly mild temperament, and the usually mild temper, and the usually passionless expression of his face, arose rather from the firmness of his character, and the responsibilities of his station, than from any lack of human sympathy. His eyes were dark, small and piercing; but at times they kindled with enthusiasm. This, indeed, was the only evidence that a physiognomist could have found of genius in Marion; but when those eyes flashed indignantly at wrong, blind, indeed, must have been he, who did not notice the master-spirit within. In attire, this great warrior was simple and modest. His words were generally few and plain, and after the exertion he made in welcoming Preston, he sank back into a silence which he maintained until the conference was breaking up, only as each officer delivered his opinion, Marion would cast on him a momentary glance, as if to read his soul, and then sink his head on his breast, thoughtful, and abstracted.

In a few words Capt. Horry explained the purpose for which the council had been convened. A spy had just come in with the intelligence that the garrison of Georgetown had been considerably reduced, on which Colonel Lee had proposed that an attack should be made upon the place, since the country expected some bold and decisive stroke, now that his forces and arms were united. The plan he suggested was, that a portion of the brigade should drop down the Pedee by night, and lie in ambush below the town; that on the succeeding night, this party should enter the town on that defenseless side, and taking it by surprise, upon an entrance for their comrades, who, led by Lee and Marion in person, would be ready, at the signal, to assault the entrenchments on the landward side.

The heart of Preston leaped into his throat as he heard this proposal. "Perhaps Kate may yet be saved," he said to himself.

Accordingly, when Horry ceased, and Marion, by a nod, signified his desire for our hero to speak, Preston's eye kindled, and he answered:

"My voice is for the attack, whatever be the odds. The opportunity for a bold, a result, is all I ask for. We will die to-day, or succeed. I will undertake, if necessary, to charge with my company up to the very muzzles of the battery which defends the town."

Lee turned to Horry and nodded approvingly to these words. "A lad of spirit," he whispered apart. "I have heard of his daring at Blakeley's. Had there been such at Camden, we never would have lost that day. Marion, however, took no further notice of Preston's fiery speech than to turn to the next officer at the table; but a very close observer might have detected a sudden gleam in the general's eye, like a flash, gone in a moment.

I am almost alone. I do not quite so far as these two latter, however, in considering the enterprise as certain of success, but I think it affords a fair chance—and bravery can do the rest besides, gentlemen," said he solemnly, you know that it was an attempt on Georgetown that my nephew lost his life, and you all know, too, that I have sworn to avenge him. I have not forgotten my vow. Before God, he shall be avenged before to-morrow night is past. This very night a part of the troops shall set forth." With these words he rose and dismissed the council.

Every heart was now alive for the enterprise. The memory of the outrage alluded to strung all to a pitch of indignation little short of frenzy. The watchword, "The Oath of Marion!" was adopted by general consent, and passed from lip to lip.

Preston, if may well be supposed, was even more excited than his commander. His only fear now was that his success would come too late. Agitated by this thought, he tossed to and fro on his cot, vainly seeking slumber. Many a muttered imprecation left his lips on the villain who had destroyed his happiness and that of Kate. Frequently he half breathed aloud the wish that his enemy was before him, man to man, with no one to interfere between him and his revenge.

These thoughts mingled with his dreams, when, exhausted by his agitation, he sunk finally into a troubled and feverish slumber. Strange figures hovered around his bed, and haunted his morbid fancies. He imagined himself bound hand and foot, while his enemy came to exploit over his leading Kate by the hand, now a dejected, broken-hearted creature whom, look at made tears start to the eyes. Then again she was seen, clothed in bridal white, extended, like a human sacrifice upon an altar, while Major Lindsay, as a priest, converted into a Moloch, stood ready to plunge the knife into her bosom. A third time he saw her standing before a clergyman, while the marriage ceremony was performed between her and Major Lindsay; and he thrilled with ecstasy to find he was not too late, and rushing forward to save her, the bridegroom was suddenly transformed into a grinning fiend, and she into a pale, cold corpse. Shivering with horror he awoke, and started from his bed; nor was until he had passed his hand across his brow that the ghastly vision faded entirely.

But his waking thoughts were scarcely less harrowing than his dreams. Slowly the recollection of Kate's great sacrifice, and his own unhappiness came back to him.

"To learn that I am loved, yet perhaps too late," he muttered. "Why was I so proud when we last met?"

The sound of the reveille, however, summoned him to his duty. On emerging from his marquee he saw that the camp was already in motion. The dragons were polishing their arms; officers were superintending the mustering their several corps; and the whole scene was alive with bustle and noise—the clashing of steel, and the voices of men mingling indiscriminately. Almost the first person Preston met was Sergeant Macdonald, dragging along the old butler.

"Are you quite fit for duty, sergeant?" said Preston. "That was rather a bad example you set before the men last evening." Sergeant Macdonald looked somewhat abashed, and he stammered out his apology.

"Why, you see, captain, we had no work on our hands, and dis Jamaica was uncommon good. Besides we wished to do honor to this gentleman, Mr. Snow, I believe."

"Not Mr. Snow," said old Jacob, drawing himself up with dignity, "but Jacob Blakeley, ser—massa gib me his own name Massa Capt. Preston know dat well enuf," and he bowed, but with a familiar smile to our hero.

"I remember you well, Jacob," said he, "but I fear you do not find our quarters as comfortable as those at Mrs. Blakeley's. We set out, in less than an hour, on a secret expedition, and perhaps you had better return home."

"Please God, no mass!" interrupted the old man emphatically. "I volunteer something. Dis affair, I inspect, hab somthing to do wid sweet missus Kate; and old Jacob will nether desert her while he can fight."

"But he does not even know how to wield a sabre," said Preston, turning to his sergeant, "and he has with courage just now—a regular black lobster boiled."

Preston smiled. He saw that the whole matter had been arranged between the two confederates.

"Well, since you're bent on trying a short campaign with us," he said, "I shall make no objection. Only, if you're killed, what am I to say to your mistress?"

Old Jacob looked aghast at the suggestion, but he quickly rallied, and grinning, replied:

"Nebber fear dat."

"No, indeed," replied Macdonald, "it would take a saw nail to cut through your skull."

"My skull is not so thick, Massa Macdonald," replied old Jacob, turning to the sergeant, "I had you know dat sar."

"Well," said Preston, laughing, "there is no time to be lost. Get ready at once to start."

The sergeant accordingly dragged off the new volunteer, saying, good humor edly:

"Keep close to me when we charge, and put all your strength into every blow you strike. You're an excellent quality, let me tell you, without darning—you hate those English rascals damnable."

"Sartin, sar," said old Jacob, making a full stop until he delivered himself of his speech. "Dis sar, dey good looking officers enough, but, dey, dey think Jacob Blakeley no more dan a boss!" It's mass here, and Jacob dar—and de best of missus sine ad daves. Dey tink nobuddy gemman but dar sartin. Ies show 'em dar massan but, dar A'mighty, sar, I cinkin' good 'em."

On them shall light at midnight, A strange and sudden fire.

"A moment in the British camp— A moment and away— Back to the pathless forest, Before the peep of day."

It was evening. In a large and spacious apartment, elegantly wainscoted, and filled with rich furniture, an innumerable number of lights were blazing, as if the room was shortly to witness a festival. Disposed about on little exquisitely lacquered Chinese stands were vases filled with flowers, most of them white. A rich Prayerbook lay open on a table at the head of the room. At the side a place had been fitted up for an orchestra. These were the preparations made for the bride of our hero's strange mockery!

Among numerous officers and other guests came Col. Campbell, the commander of the army too late. Agitated by this thought, he tossed to and fro on his cot, vainly seeking slumber. Many a muttered imprecation left his lips on the villain who had destroyed his happiness and that of Kate. Frequently he half breathed aloud the wish that his enemy was before him, man to man, with no one to interfere between him and his revenge.

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His doubts were only half resolved, but he could say no more, and together they advanced to the temporary altar, where the bridegroom and priest stood awaiting them.

Kate felt a choking in the throat, as her eyes first fell on Maj. Lindsay, and it seemed to her, for an instant, as if her knees were failing her. But she remembered that her father's eyes were bent anxiously on her, and from that moment there was no longer any faltering on her part.

The buzz which attended her entrance had now subsided, and a deep hush fell on the room. Every ear was strained to catch the first sound of the minister's voice. A wail might have been heard to tick.

"Dearly beloved," began the minister, in the time-hallowed form of the Episcopal church, "we are gathered together in the sight of God—"

He had proceeded thus far, when such a sudden and startling burst of tumult arose from the distant street, that he raised his eyes, with a look of alarm, from his book. It was like the confused ringing of bells, half drowned in the shouts of the people. All at once the town bell itself, close at hand, took up the uproar, and its iron tongue was heard clanging hurriedly and fiercely on the night.

The male part of the company sprang to their feet.

"Hark!" said Col. Campbell. "Can it be the town on fire?"

"There it goes, louder and louder," exclaimed a second; "it must be an insurrection."

The women now lent their shrieks to the tumult. The officers, with their hands on their swords, rushed immediately towards the door. The divine had dropped his prayer book, and his locks were full of inquiry and astonishment. Kate, with a quick look of alarm, sprang back to her father's side. All was wonder, terror and dismay.

The uproar without increased. Louder, fiercer the alarm bell rang; steps were hurrying to and fro; and at length distant shouts, mingled with the report of fire-arms, came to the ear. The drums were heard beating hastily to arms, and at this signal every military man present rushed into the house.

"Be not alarmed," said the bridegroom, turning to Kate; "it is only a false alarm, or drunken mutiny. I will soon be back!" and with these words he sprang across his companions. The females were now left alone, excepting the minister and Mr. Mowbray. But the tumult was obviously no trifling one. The shouts seemed to approach, and grew louder; a rushing sound, as of an advancing crowd, was heard, the rattle of fire-arms was continued, and seemed closer at hand each moment; and still louder and more hurriedly, the call to arms was beaten, while fiercer and fiercer the alarm bell, within its neighboring cupola, clattered over the din. A broad light now gleamed across the windows from the darkness outside, a succession of terror were heard increasing every moment.

Mr. Mowbray headed Kate to her aunt, and hurrying to the entrance, bang it up. At this the confused sounds without assumed more distinctness, and grew louder. He looked on the minister.

"It is Marion and his men," he exclaimed exultingly. "Hark! here they come!" With a wild cry, as these words of commended deliverance, Kate sprung to her father's side and looked out. At the lower end of the village one or two houses were in flames, and their bright glare light up the otherwise black prospect. Close at hand, and retreating towards her in disorder, was a company of royal soldiers, among whom she saw the largest portion of the officers lately assembled in that apartment. She could distinguish Col. Campbell and Maj. Lindsay with others, sword in hand, endeavoring to rally the men.