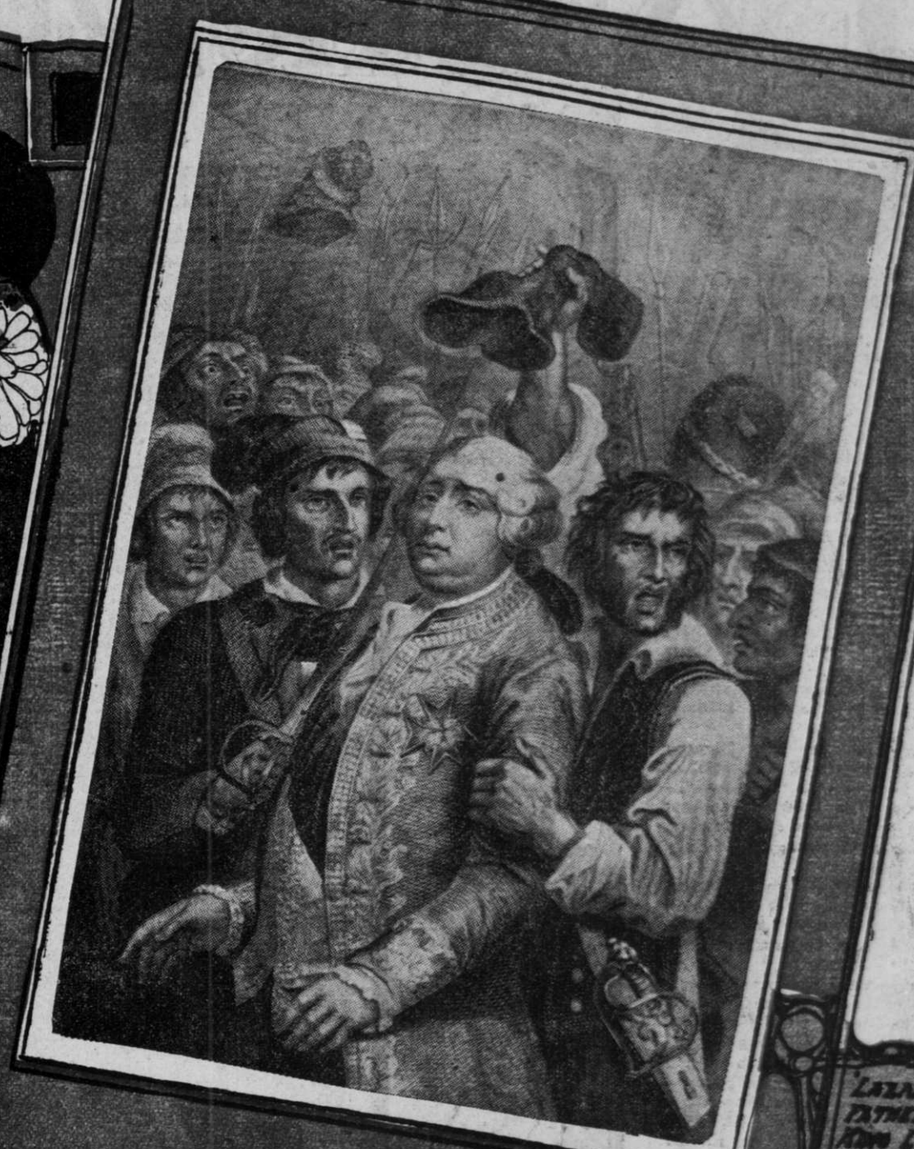
MARIE ANTOINETTE, MOTHER OF "LAZARRE" GOING TO EXECUTION.



LAZARRE'S FATHER, KING LOUIS XII IN THE HANDS OF THE FRENCH MOB.

LAZARRE'S MOTHER QUEEN OF FRANCE ON TRIAL

LAZARRE THE BOY KING LOUIS XVII IN PRISON

the lane. And though nobody followed, the two men hurried Eagle and the boy into the graveyard and closed the gate.

It was not a large enclosure, and thread-like paths, grassy and ungraveled, wound among the crowded graves. There was a very high outside wall; and the place insured such privacy as could not be had in St. Bat's church. Some crusted stones lay broad as gray doors on ancient graves; but the most stood up in irregular oblong, white and lichened.

A cat call from the lane was the last shot of the battle. Eagle valiantly sleeked her disarrayed hair, the breast under her bodice still heaving and sobbing. The June sun illumined a determined child of the gray eyed type between white and brown, flushed with fullness of blood, quivering with intensity of feeling.

"Who would say this was Mademoiselle de Ferrier?" observed the younger of the two men. Both were past middle age. The one whose queue showed the most gray took Eagle reproachfully by her hands; but the other stood laughing.

"My little daughter!"

"I did strike the English girl—and I would do it again, father!"

"She would do it again, monsieur the Marquis," repeated the laugher.

"Were the children rude to you?"

"They mocked him, father." She pulled the boy from behind a gravestone, where he crouched unmoving as a rabbit, and showed him to her guardians. "See how weak he is! Regard him—how he walks in a dream! Look at his swollen wrists—he cannot fight. And if you wish to make these English respect you you have got to fight them!"

"Where is Ernestine? She should not have left you alone."

"Ernestine went to the shops to obey your orders, father."

The boy's dense inertia was undisturbed by what had so agonized the girl. He stood in the English sunshine gazing stupidly at her guardians.

"Who is this boy, Eagle?" exclaimed the younger man.

"He does not talk. He does not tell his name."

The younger man seized the elder's arm and whispered to him.

"No, Philippe, no!" the elder man answered. But they both approached the boy with a deference which surprised Eagle and examined his scarred eyebrow and his wrists. Suddenly the Marquis dropped upon his knees and stripped the stockings down those meager legs. He kissed them, and the swollen ankles, sobbing like a woman. The boy seemed unconscious of this homage. Such exaggeration of her own tenderness made her ask:

"What ails my father, Cousin Philippe?"

Her Cousin Philippe glanced around the high walls and spoke cautiously.

"Who was the English girl at the head of your mob, Eagle?"

"Sally Blake."

"What would Sally Blake do if she saw the little King of France and Navarre ride into the church lane, filling it with his retinue, and heard the royal salute of twenty-one guns fired for him?"

"She would be afraid of him."

"But when he comes afoot, with that idiotic face, giving her such a good chance to bait him—how can she resist baiting him? Sally Blake is human."

"Cousin Philippe, this is not our dauphin? Our dauphin is dead! Both my father and you told me he died in the Temple prison nearly two weeks ago!"

The Marquis de Ferrier replaced the boy's stockings reverently and rose, backing away from him.

"There is your King, Eagle," the old courtier announced to his child. "Louis XVII, the son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, survives in this wreck. How he escaped from prison we do not know. Why he is here unrecognized in England, where his claim to the throne was duly acknowledged on the death of his father, we do not know. But we who have often seen the royal child cannot fail to identify him; brutalized as he is by the past horrible year of his life."

The boy stood unwinking before his three expatriated subjects. Two of them noted the traits of his house, even to his ears, which were full at top and without any indentation at the bottom where they met the sweep of the jaw.

The dauphin of France had been the most tortured victim of his country's revolution. By a jailer, who cut his eyebrow open with a blow and knocked him down on the slightest pretext, the child had been forced to drown memory in fiery liquor, month after month. During six worse months, which might have been bettered by even such a jailer, hid from the light in an airless dungeon, covered with rags which were never changed, and with filth and vermin which daily accumulated, having his food passed to him through a slit in the door, hearing no human voice, seeing no human face, his joints swelling with poisoned blood, he had died in everything except physical vitality and was taken out at last merely a breathing corpse. Then it was proclaimed that this corpse had ceased to breathe. The heir of a long line of Kings was coffined and buried.

While the elder De Ferrier shed nervous tears, the younger looked on with eyes which had seen the drollery of the French Revolution.

"I wish I knew the man who has played this clever trick, and whether honest men or the rabble are behind it."

"Let us find him and embrace him!"

"I would rather embrace his prospects when the House of Bourbon comes again to the throne of France. Who is that fellow at the gate? He looks as if he had some business here."

The man came on among the tombstones, showing a full presence and prosperous air, suggesting good vintages, such as were never set out in the Smithfield alehouse. Instead of being smooth shaven, he wore a very long mustache which dropped its ends below his chin.

A court painter, attached to his patrons, ought to have fallen into straits during the Revolution. Philippe exclaimed with astonishment—

"Why, it's Bellenger! Look at him!"

Bellenger took off his cap and made a deep reverence.

"My uncle is weeping over the dead English, Bellenger," said Philippe. "It always moves him to tears to see how few of them die."

"We can make no such complaint against Frenchmen in these days, monsieur," the court painter answered. "I see you have my young charge here, enjoying the gravestones with you—a pleasing change after the unmarked trenches of France. With your permission I will take him away."

"Have I the honor, Monsieur Bellenger, of saluting the man who brought the King out of prison?" the old man inquired.

Again Bellenger made the Marquis a deep reverence, which modestly disclaimed any exploit.

"When was this done? Who were your helpers? Where are you taking him?"

Bellenger lifted his eyebrows at the fanatical royalist.

"I wish I had had a hand in it," spoke Phillipe de Ferrier.

"I am taking this boy to America, Monsieur the Marquis," the painter quietly answered.

"But why not to one of his royal uncles?"

"His royal uncles," repeated Bellenger. "Pardon, Monsieur the Marquis, but did I say he had any royal uncles?"

"Come!" spoke Philippe de Ferrier. "No jokes with us, Bellenger. Honest men of every degree should stand together in these times."

Eagle sat down on a flat gravestone, and looked at the boy who seemed to be an object of dispute between the men of her family and the other man. He neither saw nor heard what passed. She said to herself—

"It would make no difference to me! It is the same, whether he is the King or not."

Bellenger's eyes half closed their lids as if for protection from the sun.

"Monsieur de Ferrier may rest assured that I am not at present occupied with jokes. It will again ask permisssion to take my charge away."

"You may not go until you have answered some questions."

"That I will do as far as I am permitted."

"Do Monsieur and his brother know that the King is here?" inquired the elder De Ferrier, taking the lead.

"What reason have you to believe," responded Bellenger, "that the Count de Provence and the Count d'Artois have any interest in this boy?"

Philippe laughed and kicked the turf.

"We have seen him many a time at Versailles, my friend. You are very mysterious."

"Have his enemies, or his friends set him free?" demanded the old Frenchman.

"That," said Bellenger, "I may not tell."

"When do you sail, and in what vessel?"

"These matters, also, I may not tell."

"This man is a kidnaper!" the old noble cried, bringing out his sword with a hiss. But Philippe held his arm.

"Among things permitted to you," said Philippe, "perhaps you will take oath the boy is not a Bourbon?"

Bellenger shrugged, and waved his hands.

"You admit that he is?"

"I admit nothing, monsieur. These are days in which we save our heads as well as we can, and admit nothing."

"If we had never seen the dauphin we should infer that this is no common child you are carrying away so secretly, bound by so many pledges. A man like you, trusted with an important mission, naturally magnifies it. You refuse to let us know anything about this affair?"

"I am simply obeying orders, monsieur," said Bellenger humbly. "It is not my affair."

"You are better dressed, more at ease with the world than any other refugee I have seen since we came out of France. Somebody who has money is paying to have the child placed in safety. Very well. Any country but his own is a good country for him now. My uncle and I will not interfere. We do not understand. But liberty of any kind is better than imprisonment and death. You can of course evade us, but I give you notice I shall look for this boy in America, and if you take him elsewhere I shall probably find it out."

"America is a large country," said Bellenger, smiling.

He took the boy by the hand and made his adieus. The old De Ferrier deeply saluted the boy and slightly saluted his guardian. The other De Ferrier nodded.

"We are making a mistake, Philippe!" said the uncle.

"Let him go," said the nephew. "He will probably slip away at once out of St. Bartholomew's. We can do nothing until we are certain of the powers behind him. Endless disaster to the child himself might result from our interference. If France were ready now to take back her king, would she accept an imbecile?"

The old De Ferrier groaned aloud.

"Bellenger is not a bad man," added Philippe.

Eagle watched her playmate until the closing gate hid him from sight. She remembered having once implored her nurse for a small plaster image displayed in a shop. It could not speak, nor move, nor love her in return. But she cried secretly all night to have it in her arms, ashamed of the unreasonable desire, but conscious that she could not be appeased by anything else. That plaster image denied to her symbolized the strongest passion of her life.

The pigeons wheeled around St. Bat's tower, or strutted burnished on the wall. The bell, which she had forgotten since sitting with the boy in front of the blacksmith shop, again boomed out its record of time; though it seemed to Eagle that a long, lonesome period like eternity had begun.

BOOK I.
AWAKING.

I remember poising naked upon a rock, ready to dive into Lake George. This memory stands at the end of a diminishing vista; the extreme point of coherent recollection. My body and muscular limbs reflected in the water filled me with savage pride.

I knew, as the beast knows its herd, that my mother Marianne was hanging the pot over the fir pit in the center of our lodge; the children were playing with other papooses; and my father was hunting down the lake. The hunting and fishing were good, and we had plenty of meat. Skenedonk, whom I considered a person belonging to myself, was stripping more slowly on the rock behind me. We were heated with wood ranging. Aboriginal life, primeval and vigor-giving, lay behind me when I plunged expecting to strike out under the delicious forest shadow.

When I came up the sun had vanished, the woods and their shadow were gone. So were the Indian children playing on the shore, and the shore with them. My mother Marianne might still be hanging her pot in the lodge. But all the hunting lodges of our people were as completely lost as if I had entered another world.

My head was bandaged, as I discovered when I turned it to look around. The walls were not the log walls of our lodge, chinked with moss and topped by a bark roof. On the contrary they were grander than the inside of St. Regis church where I took my first communion, though that was built of stone. These walls were paneled, as I learned afterward to call that noble finishing, and ornamented with pictures, and crystal sockets was evident, for one shaded wax light burned near me. The ceiling was not composed of wooden beams like some Canadian houses, but divided itself into panels also, reflecting the light with a dark rosy shining. Lace work finer than a priest's white garments fluttered at the windows.

I had dived early in the afternoon, and it was night. Instead of finding myself still stripped for swimming, I had a loose robe around me, and a coverlet drawn up to my armpits. The couch under me was by no means of hemlock twigs and skins, like our bunks at home; but soft and rich. I wondered if I had died and gone to heaven; and just then the Virgin moved past my head and stood looking down at me. I started to jump out of a window, but felt so little power to move that I only twitched and pretended to be asleep, and watched her as we sighted game, with eyes nearly shut. She had a poppet of a child on one arm that sat up instead of leaning against her shoulder, and looked at me, too. The poppet had a cap on its head, and was dressed in lace, and she wore a white dress that let her neck and arms out, but covered her to the ground. This was remarkable, as the Indian women covered their necks and arms, and wore their petticoats short. I could see this image breathe, which was a marvel, and the color moving under her white skin. Her eyes seemed to go through you and search all the veins, sending a shiver of pleasure down your back.

Now I knew after the first start that she was a living girl holding a living baby, and when my father, Thomas Williams, appeared at the door of the room it was certain I could not be in heaven. It came over me like a flash that I myself was changed. In spite of the bandages my head was as clear as if all its faculties were washed and newly arranged. I could look back into my life and perceive things that I had only sensed as a dumb brute. A fish thawed out after being frozen and reanimated through every sparkling scale and tremulous fin could not have felt its resurrection more keenly. My broken head gave me no trouble at all.

The girl and baby disappeared as soon as I saw my father; which was not surprising, for he could not be called a prepossessing half-breed. His lower lip protruded and hung sullenly. He had heavy brows and a shaggy thatch of hair. Our St. Regis Iroquois kept to the buckskins, though they often had hunting shirts of fulled flannel; and my father's buckskins were very dirty.

A little man that I did not know was in the room shuffled across the floor to keep my father from entering. Around the base of his head he had a thin curtain of hair scarcely reaching his shoulders. His nose pointed upward. Its tip was the shape of a candle extinguisher. He wore horn spectacles, and knee breeches, waistcoat and coat of black like the ink which fades to brown in a drying ink horn. He put his hands together and took them apart uncertainly and shot out his lip and frowned, as if he had a universal grudge and dared not vent it.

He said something in a language I did not understand and my father gave no answer. Then he began a kind of Anglo-French, worse than the patois we used at St. Regis when we did not speak Iroquois. I made out the talk between the two, understanding each without hesitation.

"Sir, who are you?"

"The chief, Thomas Williams," answered my father.

"Pardon me, sir; but you are unmistakably an Indian."

"Iroquois chief," said my father. "Mohawk."

"That being the case, what authority have you for calling yourself Thomas Williams?" challenged the little man.

"Thomas Williams is my name."

"Impossible, sir; Skenedonk, the Oneida, does not assume so much. He lays no claims to William Jones or John Smith, or some other honest British name."

The chief maintained silent dignity.

"Come, sir, let me have your Indian name! I can hear it if I cannot repeat it."

Silently, contemptuously, my father turned toward me.

"Stop, sir!" the man in the horn spectacles cried. "What do you want?"

"I want my boy."

"Your boy? This lad is white."

"My grandmother was white," condescended the chief. "A white prisoner from Deerfield. Eunice Williams."

"I see, sir. You get your Williams from the Yankees. And is this lad's mother white, too?"

"No. Mohawk."

"Why, man, his body is like milk! He is no son of yours."

The chief marched toward me.

"Let him alone! If you try to drag him out of the manor I will appeal to the authority of Le Ray de Chaumont."

My father spoke to me with sharp authority—

"Lazarre!"

"What do you call him?" the little man inquired, ambling beside the chief.

"Eleazar Williams is his name. But in the lodges at St. Regis, everywhere, it is Lazarre."

"How old is he?"

"About 13 years."

"Well, Thomas Williams," said my fretful guardian, his antagonism melting to patronage, "I will tell you who I am and then you can feel no anxiety. I am Dr. Chantry, physician to the Count de Chaumont. The lad cut his head upon a rock diving in the lake and has remained unconscious ever since. This is partly due to an opiate I have administered to insure complete quiet and he will not awake for several hours yet. He received the best surgery as soon as he was brought here and placed in my hands by the educated Oneida, Skenedonk."

"I was not near the lodge," said my father. "I was down the lake fishing."

"I have bled him once and shall bleed him again; though the rock did that pretty effectually. But these strapping young creatures need frequent blood-letting."

The chief gave him no thanks and I myself resolved to knock the little doctor down if he came near me with a knife.

"In the absence of Count de Chaumont, Thomas," he proceeded, "I may direct you to go and knock on the cook's door and ask for something to eat before you go home."

"I stay here," responded my father.

"There is not the slightest need of anybody's watching beside the lad to-night. I was about to retire when you were permitted to enter. He is sleeping like an infant."

"He belongs to me," the chief said.

Dr. Chantry jumped at the chief in rage.

"For God's sake, shut up and go about your business!"

It was like one of the little dogs in our camp snapping at the patriarch of them all and recoiling from a growl. My father's hand was on his hunting knife; but he grunted and said nothing. Dr. Chantry himself withdrew from the room and left the Indian in possession. Weak as I was I felt my insides quake with laughter. My very first observation of the whimsical being tickled me with a kind of foreknowledge of all his weak fretfulness.

My father sat down on the floor at the foot of my couch, where the wax light threw his shadow, exaggerating its unmoving profile. I noticed one of the chairs he disdained as useless, though when eating or drinking with white men he sat at table with them. The chair I saw was one that I faintly recognized as furniture of some previous experience, slim-legged, gracefully curved and brocaded. Brocaded was the word. I studied it until I fell asleep.

The sun, shining through the protected windows instead of glaring into our lodge door, showed my father sitting in the same position when I woke, and Skenedonk at my side. I liked the educated Iroquois. He was about ten years my senior. He had been taken to France when a stripling and was much bound to the whites, though living with his own tribe. Skenedonk had the mildest brown eyes I ever saw outside a deer's head. He was a bald Indian with one small scalplock. But the just and perfect dome to which his close-lying ears were attached needed no hair to adorn it. You felt glad that nothing shaded the benevolence of his all-over forehead. By contrast he emphasized the sullenness of my father; yet when occasion had pressed there never was a readier hand than Skenedonk's to kill.

I tossed the cover back to spring out of bed with a whoop. But a woman in a high cap with ribbons hanging down to her heels, and a dress short enough to show her toes, stepped into the room and made a courtesy. Her face fell easily into creases when she talked and gave you the feeling that it was too soft of flesh. Indeed, her eyes were cushioned all around. She spoke, and Skenedonk answered her in French. The meaning of every word broke through my mind as fire breaks through paper.

"Madame de Ferrier sent me to inquire how the young gentleman is."

Skenedonk lessened the rims around his eyes. My father grunted.

"Did Madame de Ferrier say 'the young gentleman'?" Skenedonk inquired.

"I was told to inquire. I am her servant Ernestine," said the woman, her face creased with the anxiety of responding to questions.

"Tell Madame de Ferrier that the young gentleman is much better and will go home to the lodges to-day."

"She said I was to wait upon him and give him his breakfast under the doctor's direction."

"Say, with thanks to Madame de Ferrier, that I wait upon him."

Ernestine again courtesied and made way for Dr. Chantry. He came in quite good-natured and greeted all of us, his inferiors, with a humility I then thought touching, but learned afterward to distrust. My head already felt the healing blood, and I was ravenous for food. He bound it with fresh bandages, and opened a box full of glittering knives