

An Exciting Story of the War of 1812.

BY JOHN R. MURKIN.

CHAPTER XIII. (Continued.)

Mrs. Hatchet strolled noiselessly away to the room of the wounded and found him still quietly sleeping. The noise of the noise and confusion all along the line of earthworks. There were loud voices and the hurrying of footsteps of men.

"The spies have again been at work, Mrs. Hatchet."

"Then they cannot change him with being a spy."

"Who?"

"The rescuers of the Xenophons—that would go most surely to the men of war from the harbor."

"But Jack believes he is a spy."

"He cannot be, for Griffith said he was a prisoner held in the guard-house, and cannot be."

"I don't see we difference who it is," said Mrs. Hatchet; "there is great danger to us."

OH agreed with her, but felt some little relief in knowing that that strange man had been captured and great interest was now abroad concerning him.

In the noise and confusion the two were not notice that the guard, which had been left at the house, had forgotten their duty and were carrying out their orders. The house was entirely unprotected, and the women of the mercy of the intruders who might be bold enough to enter the house.

Captain Gatrell's house, the soldier will be the most likely to be the hill at the extreme north end of the village, and were just within the line of earthworks. There was a ravine spanned by a footbridge between the house and the village.

This isolated house was some distance from the others and might easily be missed without any one else in the village being any wise.

After a while the excitement seemed to die away. The women were about turning around to go to the house when the noise of the gunboat in the distance was heard.

"What does that mean?" Ola asked.

"There is fighting down there."

For a few moments a sharp firing was heard all around still. Then came the hurried sound of feet and the voices of the Yankees. Some were heard to say:

"Come on, boys. Conserve their pluck, we'll make them old Nick's coat next night."

They could hear the Yankees with about fifty others, the breastworks and houses away through the woods in the direction of the firing.

Again all became silent. Ola and Mrs. Hatchet re-entered the house. They were in the inner room and heard him still alone. All thought he was confused and uprooted of that terrible night he had slept.

Mrs. Hatchet at last prevailed on our hero to go to his room and retire. Days of anxiety and nights of watchful and hovering care had made poor girl and her poor room seem to her quiet when she reached it that she thought she could sleep sweetly.

She threw herself on the bed without removing her clothes and a few moments was unconscious. The knightly hours of rest and silence still enveloped the Gatrell mansion.

The church clock in the steeple had just ceased striking twelve and had last rung out the hour. It was the first time when he came to the window that same dark face which he peered in on the leaves. There was a diabolical grin upon it, and the eyes gleamed with a fiendish delight.

When he was suddenly aware, and a second figure appeared at his side. Then a thin ray of light from a dark lantern appeared through the window. The head and shoulders of a man were then in the room, and he noiselessly held the candle so that the rays fell upon the face of the sleeping girl. The man, who wore the uniform of a British officer, walked noiselessly to the bed where the young Captain lay, extracting a handkerchief with liquid from a vial, held it to his face.

Her breaking seemed to cease, and lifting the apparently numinous form in his strong arms, he ran to the window, and through the glass, looking out in the position. They hustled with their fair captive to the parapet, scaled it, and were hastening through the woods when the sentry shot them.

"Come on, Griff. They're goin' to take us," said the soldier, who darted the insensible Ola in his arms. Both set off at a run into the woods.

CHAPTER XIII.

GRIFFITH ALARMED.

Capt. Alton's course was beyond doubt, open to criticism. No man of much judgment would have taken the great risk which he did.

He was of those impulsive, dash-fallows who—success or military misfortune in dash and dash. There might be a star or two in his cap, but he had no heart, and yet with half a dozen raw recruits he ploughed on, perfectly heedless of what was before him, or into whose hands he might fall.

The ground was covered over. His followers stepped over the slippery rocks and fell at every few paces.

"Come on—come on!" he called, every few moments. "We must take them in and leave something of these spurs."

For half an hour the little band of heroes had been on the march, ploughing through the wood, over the rough, uneven stones made slippery by the recent rains.

"Griff," said Jack Hatchet, who had been a hard stick, "them fellers o' our'n are laggin' behind. I think ye're goin' to wear 'em out."

Griff paused for the struggle through the darkness, brambles, and slippery stones. The wind still blew.

"I'm not used to climbing a mountain," we can't be far from the bunch."

"Me, Griff, I reckon not; if you'll just listen you'll have the wear and dash again the rocks."

The parting waves could be plainly heard from where they stood, and no sound of their companions reached their ears.

"Jack, they have stopped."

"I guess so, Griff. They fell to the ground and lay still."

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