

ENGLISH VICTORS
BY
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Chapter 1: A Panic-Stricken City.

It had come at last! The long delay and suspense were over. The English had stormed the Heights of Abraham. Their long red lines had been seen by terrified citizens, who came rushing into the town at dawn of day. The supposed attack at Beauport had been nothing but a blind. Whilst Montcalm and Vaudreuil were massing the troops to repel the enemy here, the real assault had been made behind the city, and the English foe was almost upon them.

Colin had dashed out when the first grey of the dawn had stolen in at their windows. There had been no sleep for Quebec that night. The whole city was in a state of tense excitement. Confidently had the Generals declared that the enemy were bent upon their own destruction; that they were about to tempt fate, and would be driven back with ignominy and loss.

"Let them come! Let them taste of the welcome we have to offer them! Let them see what Quebec has to give them when they reach her strand!"

These words, and many similar to them, were passed from mouth to mouth by the garrison and townsfolk of Quebec. None would admit that disaster was possible to "the impregnable city;" and yet its shattered walls and ruined houses, the crowded hospital and the deserted buildings, all told a terrible tale. The upper town had suffered lately almost as severely as the lower had done at the commencement of the bombardment. It was a problem now where to find safe shelter for the citizens. Great numbers of them had fled to the country beyond, or to other Canadian settlements; for not only was this terrible bombardment destroying their homes, and inflicting fearful hurt upon those exposed to it, but provisions were becoming very scarce; and if the English once got foothold on the west side of the town, they would be able to cut off Quebec from her source of supply.

Colin dashed out for tidings so soon as the dawn crept into the sky; and Madame Drucour and Corinne sat very close together, so absorbed in listening that they could scarce find words in which to reassure each other.

They were no longer in the little narrow house where once they had dwelt. That had been shattered at last by some of the heavier guns which the enemy had brought to Point Levi, and they had been forced to abandon it. They were in a house which so far had not been touched, sheltered as it was behind some of the fortifications. It belonged to Surgeon Arnoux, a clever and competent man, who was at present with the army of Bourlemaque; but his younger brother, Victor, also a surgeon, was still in the city, and he had generously opened his house to several of the unfortunate citizens who had been rendered homeless by the bombardment.

At present the house contained as its residents Madame Drucour, with her brother the Abbe, and Colin and Corinne. The Bishop, Pontbriand, who was dying himself of a mortal disease, but was still able to go about amongst the sick and wounded, was another inmate, beloved of all. The party was waited on sedulously by an old servant of the Ursulines, Bonnehomme Michel, as she was called, who was the most faithful, hard-working, and devoted of creatures, and displayed the greatest ingenuity in contriving, out of the scantiest of materials, such dishes as should tempt the appetite of the sick Bishop, and make the rest forget that they were in a beleaguered city.

Corinne had learned by this time what the horrors of war were like. Her fair face was both thinner and graver than it had been in past days. She had known the terrible experience that leaves its mark upon the witnesses: she had been one of more than one company when a bursting shell in their midst had brought death to some amongst those with whom she was sitting. She had seen men-- yes, and women too--struck down in the streets by shot or splinters. She had worked side by side with Madame Drucour amid the sick and wounded, and had seen sights of horror and suffering which had branded themselves deeply into her soul.

She could never again be the careless, laughing Corinne of old; and yet the soldier spirit in her burned stronger and ever more strong. If war was a fearful and terrible thing, it had its glorious side too. She heard, with a strange thrill of mingled pain and pride, of the gallant doings of the English troops. She regarded the cautious policy of the French with something like contempt. She and Colin would sometimes steal down to the margin of the water, and look at the English vessels which had braved the guns of the town, and were riding safely at anchor in the upper basin; and would feel a thrill of admiration at the dauntless bravery of the British sailors and soldiers. After all, if Quebec were to fall to such gallant foes, would she suffer much after the first shock was over?

They had lost their three merry midshipmen. When General Wolfe had sent over several boatloads of prisoners taken in the unguarded villages of the upper river, it had been agreed that any English prisoners in the town should be given in exchange; and the lads, cheering lustily the while, had been rowed away by the returning boats.

Colin and Corinne had missed their companionship, but had been assured of a meeting before so very long. They knew what that had meant, yet they could not resent the suggestion. Constant companionship with the English middies had intensified their interest in the English cause. They did not speak of it much except to one another, but in secret they had no fear of the unknown foe. They felt a certain exultation and triumph in the stories they were always hearing of English prowess and valour.

And now it was known to all that the crucial moment had come. The English had made a great coup. They had landed; they had stormed the heights; they were said to be intrenching themselves and bringing up their guns; and although this was not true at the moment, the very thought struck terror into the hearts of the citizens and soldiers.

Unless they could be dislodged from their present commanding position, the town was lost. That was the word in the mouths of all. A mounted messenger, followed by others, had been sent flying to Montcalm and Vaudreuil. It was certain that the General would be quickly on the spot, and surely he and his army together would suffice to drive back or annihilate this audacious intruder!

So said the people; yet none dared to make light of the peril. Madame Drucour's face was very grave as she sat looking out into the street, her arm about Corinne. It was not even safe for them to try to go out to the hospital that morning--the hospital which had been moved out of the town and erected upon the plain of the St. Charles, out of reach of the enemy's guns. Hitherto the Heights of Abraham had been like a rampart of defence; now they were alive with the battalions of the foe. The plain might at any time become the scene of a battle or a rout.

"Here is Colin back!" cried Corinne, suddenly starting to her feet. "Now he will tell us!"

"It is all true!" cried the lad, bursting into the room. "It is wonderful to see them; it is marvellous what they have done. They must have scaled the cliffs at almost impossible places; and now they are forming up in a splendid way! The whole plateau is alive with them!"

"The first rays of the sun striking across it were dyed red with the scarlet uniforms. It was magnificent to see them. I cannot tell whether they have any guns there. I saw none. But it is not easy to get a good view of the plain; the ridge above the town hides it."

"But what is our General doing?" asked Madame Drucour, with clasped hands.

"They say he is coming; they say he is on his way from the Beauport camp with the whole army at his back. If he has also sent a message directing Bougainville to advance at the same time from Cap Rouge and fall upon the English rear, it might well be that the invaders would be cut to pieces. But no one here knows what is ordered. Some say one thing and some another. One thing alone is certain--the Marquis is on his way."

The Abbe, who had been out to gather news, came back now with much the same tale that Colin had to tell. There was no manner of doubt about it. The English army had, as by magic, appeared upon the Heights of Abraham, and had set themselves in battle array upon the best piece of ground for their purpose. The sight of the compact red lines filled the French with dismay and fear. If an enemy could do this in a single night, what might they not have the power of achieving?

"We are in God's hands," said the Abbe to his sister, as they hastily, and without much appetite, partook of the meal which Bonnehomme Michel spread for them; "but truly I fear me that disaster is in store for the arms of France. There seems no reason why we should lack power to drive back the English to their ships; yet I have that within me which speaks of calamity and disaster. Canada has become helpless and corrupt. When that has befallen a country or a community, it has always fallen. I fear me that the days of French rule are numbered. I only pray that if the English reign here in our stead, they may prove themselves merciful masters, and keep their promise not to interfere with the exercise of the true faith in which the people have been brought up."

"If the English have pledged their word to that, they will keep it," answered Madame Drucour; "and if Canada must fall, we may rejoice that it should fall into hands as merciful as those of our English rivals."

"That is true," said her brother: "they have set us many a noble example of clemency and honour. Yet their hands are not altogether free from blood guiltiness. There have been acts of violence and cruelty committed even during these past weeks along the shores of the river."

"Yes," answered Madame Drucour: "houses have been burned and families turned adrift, and much suffering has resulted therefrom. War is ever cruel, and the track of it is marked with fire and blood. Yet we must remember that the persons thus molested had fair warning given them. They might have remained in safety had they submitted to the conditions imposed by General Wolfe. Perhaps they showed more spirit by resistance; but they drew down their fate upon themselves. And no woman or child has been hurt; no cruelties have been inflicted upon prisoners. No Indians have been suffered to molest them. Would we have been as forbearing--as stern in the maintenance of order and discipline? The only acts of cruelty committed on the English side have been by Rangers not belonging to the regular army, and those only upon Indians or those degraded Canadians who go about with them, painted and disguised to resemble their dusky allies. For my part, I think that men who thus degrade themselves deserve all that they get."

"It is well to seek to find consolation in time of extremity," said the Abbe, "and I do rejoice very heartily in the knowledge that we have a merciful foe to deal with. If this city is forced to open her gates to the English, I verily believe that no scenes of outrage will disgrace the page of history upon which this day's doings shall be recorded. There is help in that thought at least."

But it was impossible for either Colin or his uncle to remain within doors upon such a day. He insisted that Madame Drucour and Corinne should not adventure themselves beyond the city walls, though he did not condemn them to remain within doors. But he, for his own part, must go forth and see what was befalling without; for the Abbe, in spite of his vows, was half a soldier at heart, and had done some fighting in his young life, and knew the sound of the clash of arms.

He was not going to adventure himself into the battle, or to suffer Colin to do so either; that would be useless. Indeed the boy had no desire to enter the lists against the English, being more than half on their side as it was, although the infection of the feelings of the townspeople rendered it difficult for him exactly to know his own mind.

He and Corinne were alike consumed with an overpowering sense of excitement. It was the thought of the battle about to be waged that filled the minds of both--the imminence of the coming struggle. As for the result, that was less a matter of concern to them. The crisis was the overwhelming consideration in their minds.

The Abbe and Colin had gone. The streets were beginning to fill with excited people. The storm of shot and shell was not falling upon Quebec today. The guns had been directed upon the Beauport camp, to cover the real enterprise being carried on above. Also the river had to be watched and guarded. Everything spoke of a change in tactics. There was a tense feeling in the air as though an electric cloud hung low over the city.

Then came a burst of cheering. Montcalm had been seen spurring on with only a small band of followers over the bridge of the St. Charles towards the scene of danger; and now the army itself was in sight, making its way after him across the bridge and towards the city, through whose streets they must pass to gain unmolested those heights where the English were awaiting them, drawn up in close array.

Montcalm's face was full of anxiety, and yet full of courage, as he returned the plaudits of the citizens. He knew that affairs were serious, but he hoped and believed that he should find but a small detachment of the enemy waiting to receive him. He could not believe that very much had been accomplished in one night. A little resolution and courage and military address, and the foe would be dislodged and driven ignominiously down those precipitous heights which they had scaled with such boldness a few hours before.

It was a fine sight to see the troops pouring in by the Palace Gate, and out again by the gates of St. Louis and St. John--the white uniforms and gleaming bayonets of the battalions of old France, the Canadian militia, and the troops of painted Indians following, cheered by the citizens, reinforced by the garrison, their hearts animated by lust of conquest and an assurance of victory, which assurance was not altogether shared by the citizens themselves,

whose scouts had brought in alarming tidings concerning the strength of the English position.

And now the soldiers had all marched through; the last of the bands had disappeared from the streets; the garrison had taken themselves to their own quarters; the men of the town had flocked out of the city in the hope of seeing something of the fight; and the streets were chiefly thronged by anxious women and wondering, wide-eyed children--all crowding together in groups, their faces turned towards those heights above where they knew the struggle was to be fought out.

"Hark to the firing!"

A deep silence fell upon the crowds in the streets--the hush of a breathless expectancy. The rattle of musketry fell upon their ears, and then a sound almost like a cannon shot. It was the volley of the English, delivered with such admirable precision. An involuntary scream arose from many as that sound was heard. Had the English got their artillery up to those inaccessible heights?

But no; there was no further sound of cannonading, only a fierce and continuous fusillade, which told of the battle raging so fiercely up yonder on the heights.

Some women crowded into the churches to offer prayers at the shrines of saint or Virgin; but the majority could not tear themselves away from the streets, nor from the open space near to the gate of St. Louis, by which gate news would most likely enter.

And it did.

How the time went none could say, but it seemed only a short time after the firing had commenced before white-faced scouts from the town, who had gone forth to see the battle, came running back with gestures of terror and despair.

"The English are shooting us down like sheep. The French give way on every side. Their terrible fire mows down our ranks like grass before the scythe! They are charging upon us now! We are scattered and fleeing every way! Alas, alas! the day is lost. Quebec will fall!"

"Lost! it cannot be lost in this time," cried pale-faced women, unable and unwilling to believe. "Where is the Governor? he will come up with the reserves. Where is Bougainville? surely he will fall upon the English rear! Have we not twice the force of the English? We cannot be conquered in this time! it would be a shame to France forever."

So cried the people--one calling one thing, and another another, whilst every fresh scout brought in fresh tidings of disaster. There could be no doubt about it. The French army had been routed at the first onset. Where the fault lay none could tell, but they were flying like chaff before the wind.

Corinne stood close beside her aunt, silent, with dilated eyes, her heart beating almost to suffocation as she sought to hear what was said, and to make out the truth of the thousand wild rumours flying about.

Colin came dashing through the gate. His face was flushed; he had lost his hat; he was too breathless to speak. But he saw Corinne's signal, and came dashing up to them. He flung himself down upon the ground, and struggled for breath.

"O Colin, what have you seen?"

In a few moments more he was able to speak.

"I have seen the battle!" he gasped; "I have seen it all. I could not have believed it would have been fought so soon. I have seen something that these people would rejoice to know, but I shall not tell them. I have seen the fall of General Wolfe!"

Madame Drucour uttered a short exclamation of dismay.

"General Wolfe killed! Colin, art thou sure?"

"Not sure that he is dead, only that he fell, and was carried away by his men. He was heading the charge, as a brave General should. Oh, had you seen how that battle was directed, you could not but have admired him, whether friend or foe! It teaches one what war can be to see such generalship as that."

"He is a great man," said Madame Drucour softly; "I have always maintained that. Pray Heaven his life be spared, for he will be a merciful and gallant victor; and if he fall, we may not meet such generous, chivalrous kindness from others."

"Here come the soldiers!" cried Corinne, who from a little vantage ground could see over the battlements. "Ah, how they run! as though the enemy were at their heels."

"Are you men? are you soldiers? For shame! for shame! To run like sheep when none pursues! Now indeed will I call myself French no longer; I will be a British subject like my mother. It is not willingly that I desert a losing cause; but I cannot bear such poltroonery. When have the English ever fled like this before us? Oh, it is a shame! it is a disgrace!"

"Ah, if you could have seen the English soldiers!" cried Colin, with eager enthusiasm; "I never heard a volley delivered as theirs was! They never wasted a shot. They stood like a rock whilst the French charged across to them, firing all the time. And when they did fire, it was like a cannon shot; and after that, our men seemed to have no spirit left in them. When the smoke of the second volley cleared off, I could scarce believe my eyes. The dead seemed to outnumber the living; and these were flying helter-skelter this way and that!"

"But did not the General strive to rally them?"

"Doubtless he did. Our Marquis is a brave soldier and an able General; but what can one man do? Panic had seized the troops; and if you had heard the sound of cheering from the ranks of the English, and that strange yell from those wild Highlanders as they dashed in

pursuit, you would have understood better what the soldiers felt like. They ran like sheep-- they are running still. I saw that if I were to have a chance of bringing you the news, I must use all my powers, or I should be jammed in the mass of flying humanity making for the city; and since the English are not very far behind, I had need to make good my retreat."

It was plain that Colin was only a little in advance of a portion of the defeated army, whose soldiers were now flocking back to the city, spreading panic everywhere.

Suddenly there ran through the assembled crowd a murmur which gathered in volume and intensity, and changed to a strange sound as of wailing. Corinne, who had the best view, leaned eagerly forward to see, and her face blanched instantly.

A horseman was coming through the gate, supported on either side by a soldier; his face was deadly white, and blood was streaming from a wound in his breast.

Madame Drucour looked also and uttered a cry:

"Monsieur le Marquis est tue!"

It was indeed Montcalm, shot right through the body, but not absolutely unconscious, though dazed and helpless.

Instantly Madame Drucour had forced a passage through the crowd, and was at his side.

"Bring him this way," she said to those who supported him and led the horse; "he will have the best attention here."

Montcalm seemed to hear the words, and the wail of sorrow which went up from the bystanders. He roused himself, and spoke a few words, faintly and with difficulty.

"It is nothing. You must not be troubled for me, my good friends. It is as it should be--as I would have it."

Then his head drooped forward, and Madame Drucour hurried the soldiers onward to the house where she now lived; Colin running on in advance to give notice of their approach, and if possible to find Victor Arnoux, that the wounded man might receive immediate attention.

The surgeon was luckily on the spot almost at once, and directed the carrying of the Marquis into one of the lower rooms, where they laid him on a couch and brought some stimulant for him to swallow. He was now quite unconscious; and the young surgeon, after looking at the wound, bit his lip and stood in silent thought whilst the necessary things were brought to him.

"Is it dangerous?" asked Madame Drucour, in an anxious whisper, as she looked down at the well-known face.

"It is mortal!" answered Victor, in the same low tone. "He has not twelve hours of life left in him."

Chapter 2: Surrender.

"Is the General yet living?" asked the Abbe an hour or two later, entering the house to which he knew his friend had been carried, a look of concentrated anxiety upon his face.

Madame Drucour had heard his step even before she heard his voice. She was already beside him, her face pale and her eyes red with weeping.

"Ah, my brother," she cried, "thou art come to tell us that all is lost!"

"All would not be lost if the army had a head!" answered the Abbe, with subdued energy. "We could outnumber the enemy yet if we had a soldier fit to take command. But the Marquis--how goes it with him?"

"He lives yet, but he is sinking fast. He will never see the light of another day!" and the tears which had gathered in Madame Drucour's eyes fell over her cheeks.

"My poor friend!" sighed the Abbe; and after a pause of musing he added, "Is he conscious?"

"Yes; he came to himself a short while ago, and insisted upon knowing how it was with him."

"He knows, then?"

"Yes--Victor Arnoux told him the truth: but I think he knew it before."

"And what said he?"

"That it was well; that he should not live to see the surrender of Quebec; that his work was done on earth, and he ready to depart."

"Then he thinks the cause is lost?"

"Those are the words he used. Perchance he knows that there is no one now to lead or direct them. You know, my brother, that the brave Senezergues lies mortally wounded. He might have taken the command; but now we have none fit for it. You have seen what is passing without the city; tell me of it! What does the Governor? They say that when the battle was fought he had not yet appeared upon the scene of action."

"No," answered the Abbe bitterly, "he had not. Yet he had had notice four hours before the fighting commenced, and was nearer than the Marquis, who brought the army up. He came too late to do anything. He is always late. He comes up at the end of everything--to claim credit if the day is won, to throw the blame upon others if fortune frowns. He is saying now that it was a deplorable mistake on Montcalm's part to attack before he had joined issues with him; as though his raw Canadians had ever done any good in the open field!"

"You have seen him, then?"

"Yes; he and a part of the routed army have taken possession of the redoubt at the head of the bridge of boats across the St. Charles, and so completely are they cowed and terrified that it was all that a few of the cooler-headed ones of us could do to prevent the men from cutting in pieces the bridge itself, and thus cutting off the retreat of half the army, who are still pouring back over it, pursued by the English."

"Then the fight is not yet over?"

"The battle is, but not the rout. And yet there is a sort of fighting going on. The Canadians, who in the open field show themselves so useless, are redeeming their character now. They have spread themselves over the low-lying lands by the river, hiding in bushes and coverts, and shooting down the English in a fashion which they little relish. Those fierce Highlanders suffer the most from this sort of warfare, for they always throw away their muskets before they charge, and so they have no weapon that is of any service against a hidden marksman in the bushes. But all this, though it may harass the English, does not affect the issue of the day. We have suffered a crushing defeat, although the number of the slain is not excessive. It remains now to be settled whether we accept this defeat as final, or whether we yet try to make a stand for the honour of our country and the salvation of Canada."

"Ah, my brother, if Quebec goes, Canada goes!"

"That is so; but there are many of us who say that Quebec is not yet lost. It is not lost; it might well be saved. And yet what think you of this? They say that within the hornwork the Governor and the Intendant were closeted together drafting the terms of capitulation of the whole colony, ready to submit to the English General!"

"So soon?"

"So they say. I know not if it be altogether true, but all is confusion worse confounded yonder. The soldiers are pouring back to their camp at Beauport in a perfect fever of panic. I heard that Bigot would have tried to muster and lead them against the enemy once more, and that the Governor gave his sanction, but that the officers would not second the suggestion. I think all feel that with only Vaudreuil to lead fighting is hopeless. He knows not his own mind two minutes together; he agrees always with the last speaker. He is always terrified in the moment of real crisis and peril. His bluster and gasconade desert him, and leave him in pitiful case."

"What, then, is to be done?"

"That I cannot tell. I have come with a message from the Governor to the Marquis. He sent me to ascertain his condition, and if possible to ask counsel of him. His word would still carry weight. If he is sufficiently himself to listen for a few minutes to what I have to say, I would then put the case and ask his opinion upon it."

Madame Drucour drew the Abbe softly into the room where the dying man lay. Montcalm's eyes opened as he heard them approach. At the sight of the Abbe he seemed to try to rouse himself.

"You have brought news! Tell me, how goes it?"

The Abbe repeated in some detail the after events of the battle and rout, Montcalm listening to every word with the keenest interest and attention.

"Where is the Governor?" he asked at the conclusion of the narrative.

"He was still at the hornwork when I left," answered the Abbe; "but many were clamouring around him, declaring that the place would be carried by assault almost immediately, and all of them cut to pieces without quarter; and that they had better surrender the city and colony at once than lose all their lives in an unavailing struggle."

Montcalm's face, upon which death had already set its seal, remained immovably calm and tranquil.

"What said the Governor?" he asked.

"He appeared to agree with this view of the case. He is much alarmed and disturbed. He is preparing to return to his own quarters upon the Beauport road, and will there hold a council as to the next step to be taken. It was he who asked me to go back to the city and see you, my General, and ask what advice you have for us. We are in a sore strait, and there seems none to advise us; but any word that comes from you will have its weight with the army."

Montcalm lay silent a long while. Physical weakness made speaking difficult, and his mind no longer worked with the lightning quickness of old days. He seemed to find some slight difficulty in bringing it down to the affairs of earthly battles and struggles.

"Tell the Governor," he said at last, speaking faint and low, "that there is a threefold choice before him; and that though were I at the head of the army, I should say, Fight, I do not offer him counsel to do so; I only tell him the alternatives. The first of these is to fight--to join forces with Ramesay's garrison and the sailors from the batteries here, and to gather in all the outlying Canadians and Indians of the neighbourhood. With such an army as could be quickly gathered, and by acting in concert with Bougainville from Cap Rouge, there is at least a very fair chance of vanquishing the foe in open fight. The next alternative is for him to retire upon Jacques Cartier, leaving Quebec with an efficient garrison, and from there to harass the enemy, cut off supplies, and otherwise prolong the siege till the approach of winter forces them to take to their ships and go. The third is to give up the colony to English rule. Let the Governor and his council take their choice of these three plans, for there is no other."

"I will take the message myself," said the Abbe, pressing the hand of his friend, and stooping to imprint a kiss on the pale brow. "God be with you, my friend, in the hour of trial; and may He receive your soul when He shall have called it! I shall pray for the repose of your gallant spirit. Peace be with you. Farewell."

Montcalm was too much exhausted for further speech, but he made a slight gesture with his hand, and the Abbe left him, Madame Drucour stealing after him for a last word.

"You will not run into peril yourself, my brother?"

"Nay," he answered, with a touch of bitterness in his tone; "I shall be safe enough, since my errand is to the Governor. Monsieur de Vaudreuil is never known to put himself into danger. Oh that we had a Governor who thought first of the honour of France and second of his own safety!"

"But surely they will fight! they will not give up Quebec without a struggle? Look at the walls and ramparts, untouched and impregnable as ever! Our town is shattered, it is true, but that has long been done. Why should we give up the city because a few hundred soldiers have been slain upon the Plains of Abraham? We have still a great army to fight with."

"We have; but where is the General to lead us? Nevertheless, we may still show ourselves men."

"Colin, my boy, is that thou? What, dost thou want to come with me? So be it, then. Thou shalt do so, and take back word to thy aunt here as to what the council decides."

"I may find work over yonder with the sick and wounded. I may not return tonight. But Colin shall come back with news, and you will know that all is well with me."

They went together, and Madame Drucour returned to her watch beside the sick and dying man. The surgeon stole in and out as his other duties permitted him, and Corinne shared the watch beside the couch where Montcalm lay.

The Bishop, who in spite of his feebleness had been abroad in the city, seeking to console the dying and to cheer up the garrison, depressed by rumours of the flight of the army, came in at dusk, exhausted and depressed himself, to find another dying soldier in need of the last rites of the Church.

It was a solemn scene which that dim room witnessed as the night waned and the approach of dawn came on. Without all was confusion, hurry, anxiety, and distress, none seeking sleep in their beds, all eagerly awaiting tidings from the army--the news which should tell them whether they were to be gallantly supported or left to their fate. Within there was the deep hush which the approach of death seems ever to bring. The short, gasping confession had been made; the Bishop stood over the dying man, making the sign and speaking the words of absolution. A young priest from the Seminary and an acolyte had been found to assist at the solemn rite; and Madame Drucour, with Corinne and the faithful old servant, knelt at the farther end of the room, striving to keep back their tears.

It was over at last. The words of commendation had been spoken; the last labouring breath had been drawn. Corinne, half choking with her emotion, and feeling as though she would be stifled if she were to remain longer in that chamber of death, silently glided away out of the room into the open air; and once there, she broke into wild weeping, the result of the long tension of her pent-up emotion.

"Mademoiselle, mademoiselle! Corinne!" cried a familiar voice in a subdued tone from some place not far distant. "Is it indeed you? Nay, do not weep; there is no need. We shall not harm you; you and yours shall be safe whatever comes to pass in Quebec."

Corinne gazed about her in astonishment. Who was speaking to her? The next house to theirs was deserted, because the roof had been blown off, and a shell had fallen through, breaking almost every floor. Yet the voice seemed to come from a window within that house, and in the dim and uncertain moonlight she saw a head--two heads--protruding from a first-floor window. Next minute she was further astonished by the rapid descent of three figures, who seemed to clamber like monkeys down the shattered wall; and behold the three merry midshipmen were grouped around her, holding her hands and seeking to cheer her.

"Peter--Paul--Arthur! How came you here? Surely Quebec is not taken yet!"

"No, but so nearly taken that we thought to steal a march. We have been working since evening in dragging up cannon upon the plain yonder, where the army is intrenching itself; and when our task was done, we felt a great wish to see what was passing in the city where we had many friends, and which we knew so well. In the confusion it was not difficult to get in under cover of the dusk; but we found we could not get out again--at least not when we tried. But we cared little for that. There are plenty of empty houses to hide in, and we had bread in our pockets. We heard of you and Madame Drucour, and have been watching and waiting in hopes of seeing you. But, Corinne, are you weeping because the English are about to take Quebec? We looked upon you as an ally and a compatriot."

"I am weeping because our good General, the Marquis of Montcalm, is just dead," answered Corinne, wiping her eyes. "He lies within those walls, sleeping the last sleep. He will never see his wife and his mother and his mill at Candiac again. And he has talked so much to us of all those things, and of the children he loved so well. Oh, war is a cruel thing! Pray Heaven it may come to a speedy end!"

The sound of flying footsteps up the street caused the midshipmen to look at one another, and meditate a return to their hiding place; but Corinne said:

"That is Colin's step; he comes back with news."

And, in truth, the next moment Colin stood amongst them, so full of excitement himself that the sudden appearance of the midshipmen, whom he instantly recognized, did not at once strike him with astonishment.

"I will never call myself a Frenchman again!" he panted, his eyes gleaming with wrath. "What think you, Corinne? They are flying from the camp at Beauport as sheep fly before wolves. It is no retreat, it is a rout--a disgraceful, abominable, causeless rout. There is no enemy near. The English are up on the heights, intrenching themselves no doubt, and resting after their gallant enterprise. Our uncle has exhausted his powers of persuasion. He has shown them again and again how strong is their position still, how little it would even now take of courage and resolution to save Quebec and the colony. They will not listen--

they will not hear. They are flying like chaff before the wind. They are leaving everything behind in their mad haste to be gone! And the Indians will swoop down directly the camp is empty, and take everything. Oh, it is a disgrace, a disgrace! Not even to take a night to think it over. If the English did but know, and sent out a few hundred soldiers upon them, they might cut the whole army to pieces in a few hours!"

Colin, Colin! oh, is it so?"

"It is indeed; and all that the men say when one speaks to them is that Wolfe and his soldiers are too much for them. They will not stay to be hacked to pieces."

"Alas!" said Paul gravely, "the gallant Wolfe is no more. If you have lost your General, so have we. Wolfe fell early in the battle, and Moncton is dangerously wounded. We are robbed of our two first officers; but for all that we will have Quebec and Canada."

"And you deserve it!" answered Colin, fired with generous enthusiasm. "If our French soldiers and officers fling away their courage and their honour, let us welcome those who have both, and who are masters worthy to be served and loved."

It was a strange, sad day. The confusion and despair in the town were pitiful to behold. With the first light of day it was seen that the camp at Beauport was still standing, and hope sprang up in the hearts of the townsfolk. But when, shortly after, it was known that though standing it had been abandoned, and that the night had seen the indiscriminate flight of the whole army, the deepest despondency fell upon the town. This feeling was not lessened when it began to be whispered that the Chevalier Ramesay had received instructions from the Governor not to attempt to hold the town in face of a threatened assault, but to wait till the scanty provisions had been exhausted, and then raise the white flag and obtain the best terms he could.

The Abbe had stayed to bring this last letter from the flying Governor. His own soul was stirred to the depths by indignation and sorrow. It seemed to him the crowning disgrace in a disgraceful flight. Ramesay had sought speech with the Marquis a few hours before his death, but could obtain no advice from him. He had done with worldly things, and could

only wish well to those who were left behind. It was a desperate state of affairs, and all the town knew it.

So great was the confusion that no workman could be found to make a coffin for the body of the dead General. The old servant of the Ursulines, faithful to the last, went hither and thither and collected a few planks and nails, and the midshipmen and Colin assisted her to nail together a rude coffin in which the body was presently laid. It must be buried that same evening, for none knew from hour to hour what was in store for the city. But no pomp or circumstance could attend the funeral; and indeed no one could be found to dig a grave.

Yet a fitting grave was found in the chapel of the Ursuline convent, now little more than a ruin. An exploding shell had made a deep cavity in the floor not far from the altar, and this hollow was soon shaped into the similitude of a grave.

No bells tolled or cannon fired as the mournful procession filed through the streets; yet it did not lack a certain sombre dignity. The Bishop and the Abbe headed it, with a few priests from the Cathedral in attendance. Ramesay was there with his officers, and Madame Drucour, with Colin and Corinne, the three midshipmen (who no longer feared to show themselves), and the old servant, brought up the rear. As the cortege passed through the streets, numbers of citizens fell in behind, together with women and children, weeping for one whose name was dear, and who they all averred would have saved their city had he lived.

Torches were lit before the procession filed into the ruined church, and sobs mingled with the chants that were rehearsed over the grave.

"Alas, alas!" sobbed the women; "we have buried our hopes in that grave. We have lost our General; we shall lose our city, and all Canada will follow."

"It is no wonder they feel so," said the Abbe to his sister that night; "we are abandoned by the army that might have saved us. We have scarce provision to last a week, even on half rations--so I heard today--and all the merchants and townspeople are for immediate capitulation. It is possible that when our army finds itself at Jacques Cartier, thirty miles from the scene of danger, and in an impregnable position, they may rally their courage and

reconsider the situation; but unless I am greatly mistaken, that resolution will come too late--Quebec will have already surrendered."

Things had come to a desperate pass. Only one out of all the officers was in favour of resistance; the rest declared it impossible. The English on the heights were intrenched, and were pushing their trenches nearer and nearer. Though Wolfe was dead and Moncton disabled, Townshend, the third in command, was acting with the energy and resolve which had characterized the expedition all along.

Three days after Montcalm's death matters reached a crisis. Troops were seen approaching the Palace Gate from the St. Charles meadows, and the ships of war were slowly nearing the town with evident intention of opening fire.

All the city was in a state of uncontrollable fright and agitation. The officers crowded round Ramesay's quarters declaring that they could do nothing with their men; that the men said they knew that orders had been given to avoid assault, and that they were threatening to carry their guns back to the arsenal, and desert bodily to the English. So disgusted and disheartened were they by the action of the Governor and his army that they had no fight left in them.

"Raise the white flag then!" said the Commander, in brief, stern tones.

Was it a cheer or a groan which arose from the town as the symbol of surrender was seen floating above the battlements? Once it was torn down by some more ardent spirit; but again it floated high, and the people gazing up at it gesticulated and wept, though whether for sorrow or joy they could scarce have told themselves.

It was known that a messenger had gone forth to confer with the English commander, and the negotiations were drawn out hour after hour, in the hope of some succour from without; till a stern message came back that if they were not signed within an hour, the assault would be ordered.

Then Ramesay signed, having secured more favourable terms than he had dared to hope for. The capitulation of Quebec was an accomplished fact!

Yet even whilst the people were still thronging the streets and open places by the gateway, a band of weary horsemen were seen spurring towards the city. As the foremost entered he cried:

"Courage, good friends, courage! Help is at hand! The army is marching to your defence! Quebec shall yet be saved!"

Alas! Quebec had fallen. Sobs and groans went up from the women, and curses from the men. There was a rush for Ramesay's quarters to tell the news and ask what could be done; but the Chevalier's face was stern and hard.

"Nothing can be done," he said. "You have had your own will. You have signed away your city. Honour will not permit me to break my word. Besides, how can we trust an army which has basely deserted us once? If they would not attack the foe before he had had time to intrench and fortify himself, how can we hope that they will have courage to brave the assault of a formidable intrenched camp defended by artillery?"

"Go back whence you came, sirs, and tell the Governor, if you will, that his cowardice and desertion have done their work. Quebec is lost to France for ever, and Canada will follow. He could have saved it four days ago had he had the heart of a soldier or the head of a statesman; now it is lost irrevocably!"

Chapter 3: Friendly Foes.

Quebec was taken; it had surrendered without a blow when once the battle upon the heights above had ended in the overthrow of the French army.

Julian and Fritz exchanged glances of wonder when it was known beyond all doubt that the capitulation had been signed. It was marvellous to them, who knew the full peril of their

own position, that the French should be so blind. A concerted attack from the two armies of the immediate locality could scarcely have failed to drive them from their vantage ground back to their ships; and once there, the Admirals would have had no choice but to put to sea once more; for already the season was closing, and it would then have been madness to think of any further operations for that season.

And yet sadness rather than joy was the main feeling in the hearts of these comrades as they prepared themselves to be of the number to march into the city.

Fritz was still somewhat lame from the effect of his wound; but his splendid physique had made light of the injury, and in other respects he was sound and strong. Humphrey walked beside him, giving him a little assistance over rough ground, and Julian was on his other side. They were full of curiosity to behold the city which it had cost them so much to take, and Fritz was anxious to find again those friends who had shown him kindness in past days. Julian, too, was very desirous to meet Madame Drucour once more, and renew with her those pleasant relations which had commenced within the fortress of Louisbourg.

Townshend, the Brigadier now in command, had granted easy terms to the place. He knew too well the peril of his position not to be thankful for having Quebec almost at any price. The garrison and the sailors, who formed a considerable portion of the force in the city, were to march out with the honours of war, and were to be shipped to France with what speed they might. The promised protection offered by Wolfe to all peaceable inhabitants was to be assured to all, together with the free exercise of their own religion.

To Townshend had been carried upon the very day of the capitulation a letter written by Montcalm only a few hours before his death, the feeble penmanship of which showed well how difficult it had been to him to indite it. In effect it was the last thing he ever wrote, and the signature was nothing but a faint initial, as though the failing fingers refused the task before them.

"Monsieur," ran the missive, "the well-known humanity of the English sets my mind at peace concerning the fate of the French prisoners and the Canadians. Feel towards them as they have caused me to feel. Do not let them perceive that they have changed masters. Be their protector as I have been their father,"

It was probable that Montcalm believed himself addressing Wolfe when he wrote this last charge. It was not known with any certainty in Quebec that the English General had fallen, Some had heard he was wounded, but no certainty prevailed. Indeed it was with no exultation that Quebec heard of the death of the dreaded Wolfe. If he were redoubtable in the field of battle, he was known to be a merciful and generous foe in the hour of victory. Madame Drucour had shed tears when told for certain of the hero's fall; the Abbe had sorrowfully shaken his head, and had told the citizens that they had nothing to rejoice over in that.

So the garrison marched out with as much bravery and martial show as they could under the circumstances, and the citizens crowded the streets and ramparts to cheer them as they went, and watch with mingled feelings the entrance of the English troops into the town and the hoisting of the English flag. Sobs broke from many, and a deep groan rose shudderingly upon the air; and yet there were very many in the city who cared little for the change of masters, if only they might be rid of the horrors of war.

Life had long been very difficult under the French rule. So much official corruption existed, especially in the matter of supplies of food and other necessities, that the unhappy people were forced to pay double and treble value for almost everything, and were being slowly bled to death, that a few functionaries like Bigot and Cadet might fatten and grow enormously rich. They had begun to know that the English colonies were very differently governed; that they grew in strength and independence, and were encouraged, and not thwarted and hindered, in their internal development. Although much smaller in extent than Canada, their population was double that of the French colony. It was indeed the growing strength and prosperity of the English provinces which had excited the jealous animosity of the French, and had quickened their resolve to pen them in between mountain and sea, and hinder their development. And this resolve had been followed by the commencement of that border warfare to which this was the sequel.

England knew better than let herself be penned within narrow limits. She had broken through the bonds which held her back. Now she was mistress of the key and capital of Canada. It could only be a matter of time before the whole colony fell to her.

"It may be better for them in the end," said Madame Drucour, heaving a long sigh as she watched the departure of the garrison, and saw the scarlet uniforms of the English flooding

the streets of Quebec, "And yet it is hard to see it. I knew it must come, but my heart is heavy within me. If only we had made a more gallant fight, I should have felt it less."

"There he is! there he is!" shouted Colin suddenly; "there is Fritz Neville!"

"Ah," cried Madame Drucour, with a quick look of pleasure, "and there is Monsieur Julian Dautray too! Get speech with them if you can, Colin, and bring them to supper at our house. There is much I should like to ask them; and if some of the officers are to be billeted amongst us townsfolk, I would gladly have those two to care for."

"I'll go and see about it," cried Colin.

"Take us with you," cried the midshipmen, who had viewed the procession with swelling hearts, uttering now and then a British cheer, which mingled oddly with the sighs of the people. However, since they had cheered the retiring troops as lustily as their own countrymen, no one took this amiss. Indeed the young middies had made themselves popular in the town by this time, and had done something to promote a feeling of confidence in the goodwill and clemency of the victors.

Corinne and her aunt returned homeward. The girl was in a state of great excitement, sorrow for the regret of others mingling with her own secret triumph and joy in the victory of the English.

It was no use trying to disguise from herself that she was glad the English had prevailed. She had come to have a contempt and distrust of the French and their ways and their rule. She admired the English, and believed in them. They had shown courage and resolution and heroism--had accomplished a feat which had hitherto been deemed impossible. She was proud of the British blood running in her veins, and was ready to welcome the victors with all her heart.

So she decked the supper table with green leaves and grasses, and a few flowers culled from the convent garden, where it had not been torn to pieces by shot and shell. The viands were not very plentiful, it is true, since scarcity still prevailed in the city; but that would come to

an end now, for the English were already making arrangements for throwing in ample supplies.

Then she ran upstairs to don her best holiday gown, feeling a wonderful rebound of spirit after the depression and anxiety and horror of the past days. She sang a little to herself as she flitted about her room, and was only just ready when she heard Colin's voice from below summoning her to come.

She ran down the staircase and glided into the supper room, to find it (as it seemed) quite full of company. It was too dusk to distinguish faces by that time, but Bonnehomme Michel appeared at the moment, bringing in two lamps, and the faces of the guests were instantly revealed to her.

Her face lighted as she met the friendly glance of Fritz Neville, and she extended her hand with a pretty welcoming grace. The next minute she found herself exchanging greetings with an officer in British uniform, a dark-eyed, dark-haired man, with a very clear-cut, handsome face. Nor did it surprise her to hear that this was Captain Dautray, who had played a romantic part in the siege of Louisbourg.

"My aunt, Madame Drucour, has often spoken of you, sir," she said, "and told us how you disguised yourself and adventured yourself into the heart of the enemy's fortress. In sooth, I wonder you could ever dare such a deed. Suppose you had been found out?"

"Then I should have been shot as a spy, I do not doubt," answered Julian, "and should never have known the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the brave Madame Drucour--'Madame le General,' as she was called in Louisbourg--nor of being presented in Quebec to Mademoiselle her niece."

And as he spoke he bowed over Corinne's hand and raised it to his lips.

The girl blushed and smiled. Such a salute was not uncommon in those days, and there was nothing free in Julian's manner; indeed there was a grave dignity about him which

distinguished him in whatever company he found himself, and his recent military training had done much to increase the natural advantages which had always been his.

The remaining guest, who was a stranger to her, was presented as Humphrey Angell, and she looked with quick interest at him, recollecting how Fritz had told her the tale of that terrible Indian raid, and how he had found the two brothers, almost distracted by anguish and despair, amid the blackened ruins of their once prosperous settlement. This was the brother of the strange, wild-looking man whom she and Colin had seen in the forest long, long ago, and who had perished in the hour of vengeance. How interesting it was, she thought, to see all these men of whom she had heard and thought so much! She let her glance wander from one face to the other, and she was not ashamed of the feeling of keen admiration which awoke within her.

The three midshipmen were also of the company. Discipline had been somewhat relaxed in the hour of battle and victory, and they had obtained leave of absence from their ship for a while. Colin had brought them back for a farewell repast. They seemed almost like sons of the house by this time; and they had brought with them, from one of the provision transports, a supply of good victuals which had made Bonnehomme Michel's eyes shine and her wrinkled visage beam.

The scent of coffee pervaded the house, and soon a savoury mess such as had not been seen for long upon that table was set down, and the guests, in excellent spirits, took their places. Corinne found herself seated next to Julian, with Arthur on her other side. The Abbe took the foot of the table, and Madame Drucour the head. She looked pale and grave, but showed a gentle dignity and courtesy of bearing which was very impressive; and everyone showed her all possible deference.

Corinne spoke to Julian in a low voice.

"I want to ask of your General, the great Wolfe. Were you with him when he died?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle; he died in my arms. I have had the honour of calling myself his friend for above a year."

At that word Madame Drucour looked up and said:

"Ah, let me hear of Monsieur Wolfe! I had hoped to see him again myself. Such a hero, such a sweet and courteous gentleman! Frenchwoman though I be, I could have welcomed him as the victor of Quebec!"

All listened with deep attention as Julian related in considerable detail the story of the last hours of Wolfe, and Madame Drucour wiped her eyes many times during the recital.

"Ah! if he had but lived to see the city of his hopes, I would myself have been his nurse, and would have brought him back to health and strength.

"You smile, sir; but yet I have seen much of sickness. You will hear that the doctors themselves give me the credit for saving many lives."

"I can believe it, Madame; indeed I have seen something of that skill with mine own eyes. But, alas! I fear that the case of our friend was beyond human skill. I think that, had he had the choice, he would have chosen to die as he did in the hour of victory. To wear out a life of suffering in uncongenial inactivity would have been sorely irksome to his unquenchable spirit; and yet, after the hardships through which he had passed, I misdoubt me if he could ever have taken the field again. He would have endured the peril and pain of another long voyage only to die upon shipboard, or at his home if he lived to reach it. The hand of death was surely upon him."

"And to die in the hour of a glorious victory is surely a fitting close to a hero's life," said Corinne softly to Julian, when the tide of talk had recommenced to flow in other quarters. "But tell me, does he leave behind many to mourn him? Has he parents living, or sisters and brothers, or one nearer and dearer still? Has he a wife in England?"

"Not a wife, Mademoiselle, but one who was to have been his wife had he lived to return, and a mother who loves him as the apple of the eye. I shall have a sad task before me when I return to tell them of him whom they have loved and lost."

"Are you then going back to England?" asked Corinne; "are you not born in these lands of the West?"

"Yes; and I think that my home will be here when my duties to my friend are done. But first I must return to his home and his mother, and give to them there his last loving messages, and those things he wished them to possess of his. Indeed, his body is to be taken back, embalmed; the officers have decided upon that. I must see his mother and Miss Lowther again; then I think I shall return to these Western shores once again, and make my home upon Canadian soil."

"Tell me more about Mrs. Wolfe and Miss Lowther," said Corinne, with keen interest in her eyes and voice.

So Julian told her much of the events of those months which he spent in England by the side of Wolfe, and at last he drew forth the double miniature containing the likeness of the two who loved the hero so well, and gave it to Corinne to look at.

The tears came into her eyes as she gazed at the two faces. He saw the sparkle on her long lashes as she returned him the case, and he loved her for them.

"It is a beautiful face; both are beautiful faces," she said. "How sad for them--how very sad--that he should return to them no more! Do you think Miss Lowther will ever love again? Or will she go mourning all the days of her life for him whom she has lost?"

Julian shook his head doubtfully.

"I cannot tell; yet time is a great healer, and Wolfe himself sent her a message bidding her not mourn too long and deeply for him. She is still young, and the time they spent together

was not very long. I trust and hope that comfort will come to her when her grief has abated and the wound has healed. Life would become too sorrowful a thing if death were able to make such lasting havoc of its hopes and happiness."

Corinne drew a long sigh. She had seen much of death and disaster those last months of her young life. It would indeed be too cruel if the hand of time held no healing balm in its clasp.

The next days were full of interest for Corinne. Julian took her and Colin under his special protection and care. Fritz was kept to the house and its vicinity by his lameness, which the march into the city had rather increased; and Humphrey was busy in a thousand ways. But Julian, though he had sundry duties to perform, had plenty of leisure on his hands, too; and he gave up a great portion of this leisure to taking Corinne and her brother a regular tour of the various ships, and of the camps where the English had settled themselves whilst attacking Quebec--showing them exactly how the Heights of Abraham had been scaled, how the plain had been reached and the battle set in array there; and the spot where Wolfe had fallen, and that where he had died.

The bright-faced girl, with her French name and English sympathies, was feted and welcomed everywhere. Brigadier Townshend gave a dinner to some of the residents, and the Abbe and Madame Drucour, with their nephew and niece, were invited. Corinne's health was proposed and drunk amid acclamation, greatly to her own astonishment; and wherever she went she met with nothing but kindness and respect.

She was given a number of trophies of the recent war-- a small dagger that had belonged to Wolfe being the most prized of them all. She daily visited the hospital with her aunt, and cheered by her bright presence both the English and French who lay there.

All was busy in and about the city. The garrison was being shipped off to France, according to the terms of the capitulation; and a number of residents whose homes had been destroyed, and who had no mind to remain in the place now that the English were the masters, were eager likewise to be gone. The French ships in the upper reaches of the river were permitted to come down, take up their crews again, and transport the fugitives to France.

But the Abbe and his sister remained on, uncertain of their future, Madame Drucour waited for news of her husband, and the Abbe lingered to know if he could serve his countrymen any longer. They had friends in France, but were not much disposed to return to that land. Colin and Corinne were burning with desire to see England at least, even if they did not remain there; and Madame Drucour was disposed to wish the same thing for herself.

One day Humphrey brought them news. He had had news of the ex-governor of Louisbourg. He had fallen into the hands of the Indians, but had been rescued by the English, and had been sent, with a number of other prisoners, to England in one of their returning ships. The news had been brought by a sloop from New York.

Vessels were beginning to arrive in the harbour now from the enthusiastic English provinces. Those in Quebec heard how joy bells were ringing and bonfires blazing throughout New England and the provinces. Far-seeing men saw in the fall of Quebec an augury of a new and splendid empire in the west, over which England should rule. So far, at least, there was no thought of anything else, although the spirit of independence had taken deep root which another day would bring forth a different sort of fruit.

"Madame, your husband is safe," said Humphrey when brought to her to tell his tale; "I have heard it from one who saw him. He has not suffered any severe hurt at the hands of the Indians. They were of those who were wavering betwixt loyalty to France and loyalty to England, and who made captives of white men wherever they could, hoping to get a ransom for them. He was rescued by the English and brought to New York, put safely on board a home-sailing vessel, and doubtless he is safe on shore there by this time. He will be well treated; have no fears as to that. The brave Governor of Louisbourg will find many friends in England."

"Where I will join him!" cried Madame Drucour, clasping her hands. "Yes, that settles my hesitation. If my husband is in England, I will go thither and join him; and these children shall go with us, and make acquaintance with their mother's kindred in Scotland."

"Captain Dautray, can you help us in this matter? Can you secure for us a passage in one of your many noble ships so soon to return? You have been so true a friend to us that we appeal to you with confidence and courage."

"It rejoices me that you should do so, Madame. I will see to it at once. If possible, you shall sail in the same ship as I do myself. I think there will be little difficulty. Each vessel will transport a certain number of those who desire to return to France or to be carried to English shores."

Corinne clapped her hands; her whole face lighted up.

"Oh, I shall see England! I shall realize the dream of my life!

"Colin, do you hear--do you understand? We are going to England--and in Captain Dautray's ship!"

"Hurrah!" cried the boy; "hurrah for old England! And if we go in Captain Dautray's ship, we shall have our middies for our companions, for they are to belong to the Royal William, too. Ah, that will be something to live for indeed! When do we sail? and where shall we go when we get there?"

"The Admirals want to leave as soon as possible," answered Julian; "they have already stayed far beyond the time they intended. But there is much to arrange, and they will not go till they have sufficiently victualled the town, and settled the new garrison as comfortably and securely as may be.

"Still it will not be long now, And as for the rest, I can only beg of you to come first, upon landing, to the house of Mrs. Wolfe, where I myself am bound. Madame Drucour's name is known to her.

"Her son spoke much of you, Madame, and of your kindness to him at Louisbourg. And they know too how kindly others were treated--your humble servant being one. Believe me, it will be the greatest pleasure to Mrs. Wolfe to welcome anyone who has known and loved her son, I have to visit her immediately; come at least with me so far. After that we will learn where Monsieur Drucour is to be found, and I will seek him out and bring him to you."

So the matter was settled, and the Abbe gave his approval. He himself would remain in Quebec, the friend and counsellor of the victorious English, whom he could not but regard with affection and respect.

Of the Brigadiers in command, Moncton was too much shattered to do aught but go home to recover of his wounds; Townshend was resolved to sail back, to receive the compliments and honours of the victory (since Wolfe had passed beyond these things); and Murray was left in command of Quebec.

There had been some talk of destroying it rather than facing the perils of keeping it in its shattered condition, and with a French army so near. But English pluck had scorned this policy, and already the men were hard at work repairing its defences, and storing away a sufficient supply of provisions for the long, inclement winter that lay before them.

"We may have to fight for it yet," spoke some as they cheerfully worked at their fascines; "but we have got Quebec, and we mean to keep it, let the French storm and rage as they will. If we could take it from them almost without a blow, surely we can keep it now we have it!"

Chapter 4: The Last.

"Fritz, Fritz! what do you think? Who do you think has come to Quebec? Why, my brother-in-law, good Benjamin Ashley, together with his wife and daughter. They have come in charge of a trim little vessel, laden with provisions, sent as a gift from the citizens of Philadelphia to the victors of Quebec. He has charge of the cargo, I mean, not of the sloop; and he says he has come to stop, but I had no time to hear all his story. Others were flocking about him, and he had letters for the commanding officer. I hastened away to find you and tell the news. Let us go back together and learn more of this thing."

Into Fritz's face there had leaped a look of quick and keen interest.

"Benjamin Ashley," he repeated, "with his wife and daughter! Is little Susanna actually here in Quebec?"

"Yes, and my sister," cried Humphrey eagerly, "looking but little changed from the day I left her in Philadelphia months ago. And their first inquiry after kissing me was for you, Fritz. Had you escaped the perils of the war? how were you? and were you here in the town also?"

"Let us go and see them," cried Fritz, seizing his stick; "I would be one of the first to welcome them. It is true that you said Benjamin Ashley spoke of coming to Quebec if it should fall to us, but I never thought to see him here so soon. He must have a stout heart, for the perils of the place are not ended yet, I fear."

"He has a stout heart, in truth," answered Humphrey; "and right glad am I to see him. Quebec will be more of a home to us if Benjamin Ashley and his wife and daughter are dwelling within its walls."

"Indeed it will," answered Fritz eagerly; and forthwith the pair started off together in search of their kinsfolk and friends.

On the way they encountered John Stark, who was the head of the band of Rangers to be quartered in Quebec during the winter as part of the garrison, and he was greatly excited by the news.

"Hurrah for brave Benjamin Ashley! It is like the stout-hearted fellow he always was to join his countrymen in times of peril rather than wait till all was smooth sailing. We shall want stout-hearted citizens of English blood within the city walls, to people the empty houses, and save us from being too much surrounded with half-hearted Canadian residents. If we are beleaguered by a French army, as is likely enough, we shall want citizens as well as soldiers if we are to hold our prize against them."

This was, indeed, very true, and therefore it was that any settlers from New England were warmly welcomed by the officers in charge of the fortress and city. They could depend upon their soldiers in the garrison well enough; but every commander knows how much harm can be done to a cause by discontent and half-heartedness in the city.

At Louisbourg it was the voice of the citizens that had turned the scale and forced the capitulation, and the same thing had, to a great extent, happened at Quebec. The citizens had been discouraged and rendered desperate by the way in which the town had suffered, and this feeling had reacted upon the garrison, and had rendered them far less willing to try to hold out than they might otherwise have been.

It was some little time before Humphrey and his comrades could find Ashley. He had been taken to the commander of the fortress to deliver up his papers and have a personal interview with him; and it was said that he was being entertained by him at table, and his wife and daughter also.

Presently the news came that Mr. Ashley from Philadelphia was inspecting the premises of the Fleur de Lye, which was the most commodious and important inn in the lower town. It had been a good deal shattered by the bombardment, and the proprietor had been killed by a bursting shell. His family had been amongst the first of the inhabitants to take ship for France and now the place stood empty, its sign swinging mournfully from the door, waiting for some enterprising citizen to come and open business there again.

"Doubtless the Commander has given him the offer of the house and business," said Fritz when he heard. "Ashley is just the man to restore prosperity to the old inn. Let us go and seek him there, Humphrey. A stout-hearted English-speaking host will be right welcome at the inn, and our fellows will bring him plenty of custom."

The comrades hurried along the now familiar streets, and reached their destination in due course. The inn stood at no great distance from the harbour, and was in its palmy days a great resort both for the soldiers of the fortress and the sailors who navigated the great river. It was a solid building, and though its roof had been much damaged, and there was an ugly crack all down the front, its foundations were solid, and a little care and skill would soon repair the damage.

Fritz followed Humphrey into the big public room close to the entrance, and there he came face to face with Benjamin Ashley, who was just saying farewell to Brigadier Murray, and whose honest face lighted with pleasure at the sight of the stalwart soldier.

"It shall be seen to at once, Mr. Ashley," the Commander was saying. "I will set the men to work tomorrow, and in a few days the place will be habitable. You shall have immediate possession, and the sooner you can start business the better for all. We want Quebec to be a town again, and not a ruin. We want to make friends of the inhabitants, and show them that the conditions of life are not altogether altered. We want them to trust us and to think of us as friends. I am sure you will help us in this. Nothing like good wine and a jovial host to set men's tongues wagging in a friendly fashion, and lighten their hearts of any load of fear and despondency."

Murray strode out, returning the salutes of his subordinates, and the next minute Fritz and Ashley were exchanging a warm greeting.

"Welcome to Quebec, my friend; it does the heart good to see you here. Humphrey declared you had promised to come soon; but I had not dared to think it would be this side of the winter season."

"Why, yes; I have been ready and waiting this long while. To tell the truth, I have had enough of Philadelphia and its Quaker-ridden Assembly. Why, when once the war had broken out and was raging in good earnest, I longed for nothing so much as my own youth back again, that I might fight with the best of them. And the peace palaver of the Quakers sickened me. I came near to quarrelling with some of my old friends, and I grew eager to see fresh places, fresh faces. I turned it over in my mind, and I thought that if Quebec fell into our hands, English-speaking citizens would surely be wanted to leaven the French and Canadians who would remain. And if so, why should not I be one to take up my abode?"

"Why not, indeed?" cried Fritz, whose eyes were eagerly straying round the room in search of somebody he had not seen as yet. "It was a happy thought, as our Commander has just told you, I doubt not."

"He has been a capital friend--he has put me in possession of this place; and I can see that there will be the making of a fine business here. And I have not come empty-handed. I sold the old tavern over yonder, and I have a fine store of wine and ale and salted provisions stored away on board, enough to set me up for the winter."

"I must have that old sign down," added Ashley, stepping into the street and looking up at the battered board crazily hanging from the beam above; "we must have another one up instead. I'll set up a wolf's head in its place, in memory of the gallant soldier who fell on the Plains of Abraham. And I will call my inn the Wolfe of Quebec."

Fritz laughed, still looking round him with quick glances.

"And what said your wife and daughter to such a move?"

"Oh, the wife is a good wife, and follows her husband; though I won't say she did not feel the wrench of parting a good bit. As for the maid, she was wild to come! She has done nothing but think of the war ever since it began. She is half a soldier already, I tell her, and is making herself only fit to be a soldier's wife. She might have had the pick of all the young Quakers in Philadelphia; but you should have seen her turn up her pretty nose at them. "'A Quaker indeed!' quoth the little puss; 'I'd as lief marry a broomstick with a turnip for a head! Give me a man who is a man, not a puling woman in breeches!'"

"The sauciness of the little puss!"

But Ashley's jolly laugh showed that he encouraged the maid in her "sauciness," and Fritz and Humphrey laughed in sympathy.

"Where are Mrs. Ashley and Susanna to be found?" asked Fritz when the laugh had subsided.

K "Oh, somewhere in the house, poking and prying, and settling the things in woman's fashion. Anything in the house is to be ours, and we may buy cheap a quantity of the furniture which is being taken out of the houses which are too much shattered to be rebuilt. We have brought things of our own, too. Oh, we shall do well, we shall do well. It was a capital thought to come here. Canada in English hands will have a great future before it."

But Fritz was off already, leaving Humphrey to discuss the situation with his brother-in-law. He was off in search of Susanna, and presently came upon her sitting upon a wide window ledge which commanded a view of the quay and harbour, and of the heights of Point Levi opposite. Hannah was taking housewifely notes on the upper floor; but the view from this window had fascinated the girl, and she sat gazing out, lost in thought, a thousand pictures flitting through her imaginative brain.

"Susanna!" spoke a voice behind her.

She started to her feet, quivering in every limb; and facing round, found herself confronted by him whose face and form had been the centre of each of her mental pictures, whose name had been on her lips and in her heart each time she had bent her knees in prayer for two long years, and who she knew had come at last to ask the fulfilment of that promise she had given him when last they had parted.

Her hands were in his; his face was bent over hers. He disengaged one hand, and put it round her shoulders, drawing her towards him gently.

She did not resist; she gave a happy little sigh, and stood with her fair head close to his shoulder.

"Susanna, I have done what I hoped. I am a captain in the English King's army. I have won some small reputation as a soldier. I have a position sufficiently assured. You have come to live at Quebec. I am quartered there for the winter. Many of our officers and soldiers have wives who follow them wherever they go. I would not ask you to come to me to share hardship and privation; but I ask you to be my wife, here in this city, where your father's house will give you shelter if I should be forced by the chances of war to leave you for a while.

"Susanna, will you be brave enough for this? Can you make up your mind to be a soldier's wife, even before the war has closed? I had not thought to ask you so soon; but year after year passes by, and though nearer and ever nearer to the goal of peace, the clouds still hang in the sky, and there is still stern work for the soldier to do. But we seem now to see the end of the long, long war, and that a happy end; and so I ask if you can marry me, even with the

chances of one of those separations which wring the heart and entail so much anxiety and sorrow upon the wife left at home."

She was clinging to him even before he had done, shedding tears, and yet half laughing as she looked with dewy eyes into his face.

"O Fritz, Fritz, don't you understand yet what a woman's love is like? As though I would not rather a hundred thousand times be your wife, come what may in the future, than live the safest and most sheltered life without you! As though I should not glory and delight to share the perils and hardships you are called upon to endure! As though being together would not make up a hundredfold for everything else!"

When Benjamin Ashley, together with Humphrey and John Stark, came in search of the others, they all saw at a glance what had taken place. Susanna's blushing face and Fritz's expression of proud, glad happiness told the tale all too plainly. But all had been prepared for it; and Ashley laughed as he took his daughter's face between his hands and kissed it, though he heaved a quick sigh, too.

"Ah me! so all the birds leave the nest at last. And nothing but a red-coat would serve your turn, my maid! That I have known for long enough. Well, well, I cannot blame you. We owe a debt of gratitude to our brave soldiers which we must all be willing to pay.

"Take her, Fritz my boy; take her, and her father's blessing with her. She will not come to you empty handed; she has a snug little fortune from her mother ready for her dowry. But you have wooed her and won her like a man; and her love will be, if I mistake not, the crown of your manhood and of your life."

"Indeed it will, sir," answered Fritz fervently, and possessed himself of Susanna's hand once more.

Barely a week later, and the party stood upon the quay to say farewell to their friends and comrades who were sailing away for England. October was waning. The departure of the ships could no longer be delayed. Many had already gone; but today the mortal remains of

the gallant Wolfe had been conveyed on board the Royal William, and all the town had come forth to pay its last tribute of respect to one who was mourned by friends and foes alike. Flags hung half-mast high, the guns had boomed a salute, and the bells of the city had tolled in solemn cadence as the coffin was borne to the quay and reverently carried to the place prepared for it upon the ship.

Now all was bustle and animated farewell as the sailors began to make preparations for unfurling the sails and hoisting up the anchor. Julian and Fritz stood together a little apart from the crowd; their hands were locked in a close clasp. The tie which bound them together was a very strong and tender one.

"You will come back, Julian? you will not forsake these Western lands, which must always seem to me more like home than any country beyond the seas--even England, which we call our home. You will come back?"

"Yes, I shall come back; the lands of the great West ever seem to be calling me. I do but go to make good my promise to him that is gone; then I shall return, and cast in my lot with the English subjects of Canada."

"They say you are to receive promotion, Julian. You will rise to be a man of place in this colony. I am certain of it. You have talents, address, courage; and you are always beloved of French and English alike. I have heard men talk of you, and point you out as a rising man. They will want such over here when Canada has passed into English keeping."

"They will find me ready to do my best if ever they should desire to use me. I want nothing better than to serve my country, and to heal the wound between the two nations who have struggled so long for supremacy in the West."

"You will come back--I am sure of it--a man of place and importance. But you will be the same Julian still, my brother and friend. And, Julian (am I wrong in thinking it?), you will not come back alone?"

A slight flush rose in Julian's face; but he answered quietly:

"I hope not; I believe not."

"Mademoiselle Corinne--" began Fritz, but paused there; for the girl was close beside them, having come up with her aunt, Madame Drucour, to say goodbye to the group of friends gathered to see them off.

Fritz saw the quick glance which flashed between her and Julian as their eyes met, and he felt that he had got his answer. When Julian came back to Canada, he would not come alone.

The last farewells were said; the deck was crowded by those who were to sail away; the musical call of the seamen rose and fell as the sails unfurled to the breeze, and the gallant vessel began to slip through the water.

"A safe voyage and a joyous return. God be with you all!" cried those upon the quay.

The Abbe lifted his hands, and seemed to pronounce a benediction upon the departing ship, and those who saw the action bared their heads and bent the knee.

Then the sails swelled out, the pace increased; a salute boomed forth from the fortress behind, and was answered from the vessel now gliding so fast away; and the Royal William moved with stately grace through the wide waters of the St. Lawrence, and slowly disappeared in the hazy distance.

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