

eBook

The Southern Cross

For the online version of BookRags' The Southern Cross eBook, including complete copyright information, please visit:

<http://www.bookrags.com/ebooks/15629/>

Copyright Information

© 2000-2014 BookRags, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

The Southern Cross

Title: The Southern Cross A Play in Four Acts

Author: Foxhall Daingerfield, Jr.

Release Date: April 15, 2005 [EBook #15629]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

*** *Start of this project gutenber* EBOOK *the Southern cross* ***

Produced by Kentuckiana Digital Library, David Garcia and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team.

[Illustration]

The Southern Cross

Bryan Station Chapter D.A.R.

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

* * * * *

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

* * * * *

By

Foxhall Daingerfield, Jr.

* * * * *

Produced at Opera House, Lexington, Ky., April 13, 1909, for benefit of Morgan Monument.

* * * * *

Copyright 1909.

Press of
J.L. Richardson & Co.

Lexington. Ky.

* * * * *

To
the memory
of
General John Hunt Morgan.
--F.D.

* * * * *

THE PEOPLE OF THE PLAY.

Gordon Cabell Mr. McCOMAS
Carter HILLIARY (Charlotte's brother) *Mr. Harbison*
col. Philip Stuart Mr. OBERCHEIN
George Stuart (his son) *Mr. H. Yancey*
Beverly Stuart (called "Bev.") *Mr. Roach*
Stephen Winthrop (of the 12th Mass.) *Mr. McCONNELL*
Maurice Hopkins (of his command) *Mr. Sallee*
corporal Evans (also of the 12th Mass.) *Mr. Thornton*
Bill (a turnkey at the prison) *Mr. Moore*
Cupid (an old negro servant) *Mr. Addy*
the first soldier Mr. Yancey
the second soldier Mr. McGEEVER
the third soldier Mr. THIESING
Fairfax Stuart (called "Fair") *Miss white*
Mrs. Stuart Miss Daingerfield
Charlotte HILLIARY (her niece) *Miss Buckner*
aunt Marthy (Cupid's wife) *Mrs. Bennett*

Soldiers of the 12th Massachusetts.
A guard at the prison.

* * * * *

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I.

Outside the Stuart home, may 11, 1864.

"If love were all!"

ACT II.

The parlour of the Stuart home. On the following night.

"The Signal."

ACT III.

The prison at Columbus. One hour before midnight, may 22.

"The heart of a soldier."

ACT IV.

The banks of the Aspen river, six months afterward. Late in November.

"Once more we pass along this way; Once more, 'tis where at first we met!"

Time---1864.

Scene---A Southern State.

Production under the personal direction of Miss Julia Connelly.

* * * * *

THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

ACT I.

Outside the Stuart home, May, 1864. The large beautiful lawn of a typical Southern home. On the left and partly at the back stands the house, of colonial build, a wide porch running the entire length of the house, with three broad, low steps leading down to the garden. Many vines, mostly wisteria, in full bloom, cover the walls and some climb around the banisters. The porch has four white pillars reaching to the second story. On the right is a green garden bench, and at the back may be seen a road leading past the house, a low picket fence between many trees; box-bushes and shrubs are near the right. It is near twilight of an afternoon in May. On the right and through the picket fence a small gate leading to the garden and thence to the family graveyard. Over the whole scene there is a half look of decay: the grounds are not in order, the bushes are untrimmed, as though poverty had come suddenly to its occupants. At rise of curtain Aunt Marthy, an old negro mammy of the familiar Southern type, is discovered by the gate leading into the garden; in her hands she holds some roses and other flowers she has been gathering.

Marthy. 'Clare hit don't seem natural---it suttently don't. Dis hyer place ain't what it was; look at dat fence and at dem bushes! It's gittin run down, dat's what's the matter; it's gittin run down.

[Enter Cupid from the gate at back, leading into the lane.
He is an old negro of about the same age as Marthy.
His clothes are very old and worn, yet there is a
pathetic suggestion of neatness in his ragged dress.

Cupid. Marthy, is you seen dem chullen?

Marthy. Nor I ain't seen um since lunch. Mars Bev and Miss Fair don suttently tek dis place since de war brek out. I hear um say dey gwine down to de mill.

Cupid. How dey go?

Marthy. I hear Miss Fair say she was gwine ter walk, and den Mars Bev say hit too far for her; dat she got ter ride de mule: and she up an tell him ef it too far fer her ter walk, she ain't gwine, 'cause it suttently too far fer old Jack.

Cupid (indignant). Jack's er good mule yet, ef he is de onliest one we got lef. Somehow I don't feel exactly rite wid jes dem two hosses on de place sides dat ole mule; cose he's a good mule yet, onderstan; but den I can't get used to jes dem three. I often set and study 'bout dem hosses and wonder whar de is, and ef de soldiers treat um good and ef dey gits dey feed regular, and ef--

Marthy. Ef dey gits de feed regular hit more dan what we does. Since de soldiers bin comin' what wid de sewin' and de cookin' and givin' way, I wonder dat we gits on er tall. Not dat I grudge hit ter um---law, no. Wid us got Mars George and dey cousin Mars Carter, and dars Mars Gorden same as one ob de fambily, to say nothin' ob Old Marster in de army.

Cupid. And dars Mars Bev, most pester his mar to def ter let him go; but cose dat chile he too young; he ant more'n fou'teen. But den I'm frade he gwine: fer ef dat chile set his head on er thing, he good es got it.

Marthy. Go on wid you! Dat chile ant no mo' gwine in de army dan what I is. He know hit all but kill Ole Mistis when she let Mars George and Old Marster go; and den---(her voice grows soft, she looks over toward the gate (Right)---dar's Mars Phil's grave over dar. She ant neber bin quite de same since dat ambulance wagen turn in at de gate.

Cupid. Hits bin more'n two years ago; but sometimes hit 'pears like hit was only yestidy. (Marthy starts toward the gate). Whar you gwine wid dem flowers?

Marthy. Deys fer Miss Charlotte; she love ter hab um on de table. 'Pears like hit mek hit sorter brighter fer um.

[Cupid goes to gate at back and stands looking anxiously off down the road (Right).

Cupid. I'm gettin' mighty oneasy 'bout dem chullen. Dey's terbil careless 'bout demselves.

Marthy (stops on the steps and listens). 'Pears like I hears a hoss.

Cupid. Go on, nigger! Didn't I tell you dey walked to de mill?

[A horse's hoofs are heard.

Marthy (laughs). I hears hit all de same.

Cupid (drops hat in astonishment). Hi! ef dey ant not one er my kerrige hosses! Hi, dar! Mars Bev! Mars Bev!

[Enter at the back by the road Fair and Bev. She is riding on a big brown horse with a bag of meal before her. She is a beautiful young girl of about eighteen, simply dressed in a pink cotton gown; her hair hangs in loose curls about her face: her hat is carried loosely in one hand; with the other she is guiding the old horse. Bev walks at her side, with one hand on the bridle. He is a very handsome boy of about fourteen, with a gay, happy manner. He is barefoot, dressed in a soft white cotton shirt and blue homespun trousers. He is without hat or coat, and seems in the best of spirits. They stop at the gate, laughing.

Fair (from her place on the horse). Take me down, Bev. Here, Cupid, you take the meal.

[Cupid comes forward too surprised to speak, lifts down the bag, then Bev takes her hands and lifts her to the ground.

Cupid. Whar you git dis hoss?

Bev (laughs and winks at Fair). Why, out of the second stall near the door. Where'd you think?

[Marthy and Fair laugh.

Cupid. Dis hoss ant never pack no meal fo' in his life; he's er kerrige hoss.

Fair. Well, Cupid, we had to get the meal, and Jack is so old and stiff I thought Tony here would enjoy the trip, and he did, all except the ferry. I don't believe he ever crossed a stream before, not with me on his back and a bag of meal. Was'nt he funny, Bev? Dear old Tony! (She throws her arms around his neck). I wish I had some sugar for you.

Marthy. Go'long, child! You talkin' 'bout givin' sugar to dat old hoss, when we all has to put 'lasses in de coffee and proud ter git hit.

Cupid. You tell Mistis and Marster dey's come.

[He leads horse off (Left) carrying the meal.

Marthy. Yo' pa bin askin' 'bout you; he say he gwine way ter morrow.

Fair (anxious). To-morrow!

Bev. Where is he?

Marthy. He an' you ma done gone for walk round de quarters.

[Exit Marthy into the house.

Bev. Fair, did you know father was going back to his regiment to-morrow?

Fair. I was afraid of it. The wound is almost healed, but mother can't bear to have us mention his leaving us again.

Bev. Why, I had hoped to go back with him; I hate to be young. Why, Fair, do you know sometimes I feel so crazy to go off with the army I believe I'll run away, except---

Fair. Yes, I know; you mean mother. When father and George are gone, we're all she's got.

Bev. I wish I'd been twins; then one of me could go.

[Fair laughs.

Fair. But if you had been, 'twould be just twice as hard for us to give you up.

Bev. I say, let's go find father. They're walking in the lane down past the quarters.

[Fair hesitates.

Fair. You go, Bev; I'll meet you near the gate. (She smiles at him). I'm tired, I reckon.

Bev (slightly disappointed). I won't go unless you come.

Fair (sits quietly for a moment, then looks up quickly at him). Go on, Bev, don't mind if I stay here. (A slight pause). Was there any news to-day?

Bev. Nothing new. But won't it be splendid if General Morgan brings his camp near enough for George and Carter and Gordon all to come by and see us. Gee! I wish they'd come.

Fair. Oh, Bev, do you think they could? 'Twould seem too good to be true. (She is silent for a moment). Bev, did you know Stephen Winthrop and his command had been ordered to the South? Doesn't it seem strange for a man with Southern blood to fight against his people? Of course he is our cousin, and that ought to make some difference, and then he was raised in the North with only visits here. And I suppose---I suppose its natural, but then---I wish---Oh, I wish it were different.

Bev. I don't feel like he was our cousin any more. Didn't it seem strange that he and Mr. Hopkins should have visited here just before the war? I liked them fine. I believe I liked Hopkins best. I was awful sorry when they went away.

Fair (quietly, without looking at him). Does that seem very long ago to you, Bev?

Bev (surprised). Why, no: not longer than it was.

Fair. I was thinking---I can't help wondering if we shall ever see him again.

Bev. Who do you mean, Hopkins?

Fair (softly). No; Steve!

Bev. We may, though I hope not.

Fair (surprised). Why?

Bev. He'd be our enemy now.

[Fair seems greatly troubled.

Fair. Somehow I can't help thinking that we shall see him again. I often wonder if he's changed. He seemed so different from our boys---so very different, somehow.

Bev. I wonder why you never like to walk down through the lane any more? I don't believe you've been down there for a long time, not since Hopkins and Winthrop were here.

Fair (quickly). Oh, yes, I have, lots of times. When Aunt Sally was sick and when Uncle Joe died, don't you remember?

Bev. So you have; but I was thinking of the last walk we took down there. Hopkins and I went off through the woods hunting, and you and Winthrop walked down to the bars and waited for us. 'Twas night when we got back, and you and he were still standing near the bars. The moon made you look so white, I was afraid you were sick. That's why I remember.

Fair (with an effort). Don't let's talk about that any more, will you, Bev?

Bev. Of course; I didn't know you minded. Was that why you didn't want to walk there just now?

Fair (rising). Let's go and look for Charlotte: perhaps she's heard some news.

Bev. I reckon she's in the house; I'll call her.

[He runs towards the house, calling "Charlotte! Charlotte!"
Exit into house.

Fair (sits quietly on the bench looking off before her, greatly troubled). I couldn't, somehow I couldn't go there---to-day. Two years ago this night! And yet how long, how terribly long ago it seems! He told me he'd come back. I often wonder why I care: but it was such a happy time!

[Her head sinks wearily down on her arm on the back of the bench, covering her face.

[Enter from the back Col. and Mrs. Stuart. Col. Stuart is a large, handsome, soldierly man of about fifty the typical Southern Colonel. He wears his uniform and walks with a slight limp. Mrs. Stuart is a pretty, dignified, matronly-looking woman, some few years younger than her husband. She is dressed in a simple black dress of good material, that has evidently seen better days. Fair rises quickly, going to them. She places a chair for her father, who sits.

Fair (slipping one arm around his neck and pressing her cheek to his). Dear father, Bev and I were just coming to look for you.

Mrs. S. Did you and Bev go to the mill?

Fair. Yes, to get the meal; and 'twas such fun! I rode on Tony. And if you could have seen old Cupid when we got back; he thought of course we'd take old Jack.

[She laughs.

Col. S. Dear little girl, what would we do without you? It's hard for us to see you do the work meant for the slaves. You go to mill and help them cook and work and sew; and if you and Charlotte ever grieve or worry---why, we don't find it out.

Fair. Oh, you're praising us too much. We girls can't fight; I sometimes wish we could. But we can work, and when that work's for General Morgan, there's nothing that's too hard for us to do.

Mrs. S. We seem to give so little to the cause; we have so little left, only our work. That's such a comfort to feel we can do something. When the fighting's near, and all night long we hear the musketry and cannon, and when the thought comes that you and George are going to the front, it seems more than we can bear. I fix a light out there on the front porch, and wonder how the fighting's going on. Bev always stands out by the gate and listens for the sound of firing coming near. 'Tis hard to keep him then, he wants so terribly to fight with you and George. But through those nights that come so often to us now we have our work, and all night long we sit and sew and knit and listen. Oh, then the work's a comfort to feel and know we're doing it for you.

Col. S. And we out there, who fight, are called the heroes.

Fair. Father, must you go to-morrow? The wound can't quite be well. Stay for a few more days. Why, I feel as though I'd hardly seen you for a moment.

Mrs. S. (who has quietly taken his hand in both her own during Fair's last speech). To-morrow, dear, and we should thank God he can go. But let's think of to-night; to-morrow's not here yet, and we have still to-night.

Fair (rising, starts to the house). I'll go and look for Bev and Charlotte and bring them here.

[Exit into house.

Mrs. S. (softly, with a great effort). To-morrow---it must be then!

Col. S. To-morrow. (A pause). Yes, then I must go. Word came to us that Morgan's camp was moving on this way, and as we fight in battles there, so must you here. Perhaps before so very long I'll come again, and bring the boys home, too. Why, George is Morgan's right hand man. They say when Morgan wants a man of special courage, he always calls on George. When you think of all the trust that Morgan puts in him, it ought to make us glad we have our boy to give him.

Mrs. S. Yes, glad; I am glad, Phillip. I'm proud of every way we help the South. And what of Gordon Cabell and Carter Hillary? Are they with Morgan, too?

Col. S. They're Morgan's scouts. They, with five other men, have saved the army more than once. They know the roads for miles and miles. Sometimes they are away for weeks, and then they turn up with some news that means the life of Morgan's army.

Mrs. S. (looking up). But Phil, the sun has almost set, the dew is falling: we'd best go in. You musn't take a cold and on the last day here.

[They rise.

Col. S. We'll walk down through the garden; we must go there.

Mrs. S. I left that for the last. I knew you wanted to go down to---the grave.

Col. S. (quiet for a moment, then with an effort). He loved this home, didn't he, mother?

Mrs. S. Yes, he was very happy here. That tree near by the gate---the one we call "Phil's tree"---is the place I love best now.

[She takes his hand and quietly they exit (Right) by gate leading to graveyard.

[Enter from the house Aunt Marthy with a small bell in in her hand. She looks about as though to ring the bell. Stops, as she glances toward the graveyard.

Aunt M. Dey's down dar by Mars Phil's grave. I know'd dey'd go dar las' thing, fo' de come in fo' de night. 'Pears like Mistis got ter go dar every evenin' 'bout sunset. 'Pears like hit comfort her mightily, arter she set dar fer a while by de grave and smove down the grass wid her hands and spred out de fresh flowers she bring him. It seems like she happier den she bin all day. She just come out smilin' ter herself, like she ant smile since fo' de war brek out. I reckon de supper kin wait.

[Exit by side of the house.

[Enter from the house Fair, Bev, and Charlotte Hillary. She is a young girl of some twenty-two or three years, tall, slender, and very pretty, with somewhat premature dignity. She is dressed in a soft blue cotton dress, much like Fair's. She enters smiling and evidently inspired by the gay mood of Fair and Bev.

Charlotte (laughing). So I'm to be told the great secret, am I? What can it be? A new dress for Fair, or have some of your soldier friends made you happy with some trophy of the fight. Bev?

Fair. She came near it, didn't she, Bev? But you couldn't really guess, not if you tried all night.

Bev. Remember you promised not to say a word to any one.

Char. I promise. But really I can't wait another minute; do tell me, quick.

Bev (who is searching behind a bush near the house). I say, Fair, where'd you put it? 'Twas here last night.

Fair. I found Cupid digging round that bush and I knew he'd find it and tell, so I hid it here. (She reaches under the steps, drawing out a small paper parcel. She unrolls the paper, drawing out the half finished coat of a boy's uniform. It is made from pale-blue flannel, very soft, and evidently from some dress of her own. The armlets are embroidered in red cotton). Here it is. Now guess, Charlotte, before we tell you?

Char. I've seen the cloth before---the dress you had last winter. But what--I don't quite see---what is it now?

Bev (who has been trying to contain himself, comes nearer, speaking in a glad, excited voice). It's my uniform. I'm going to fight before so very long, and Fair is making it for me.

Char (taking the little coat tenderly in her hands). But your mother, Bev!

Fair. Oh, we're going to tell her, but not now. She'll let Bev go when he is needed, and so I am making this to have it ready. It isn't very nice, I know. You see, I never made a coat before, and the cloth is old and thin and not the right color; but it's all I have. I wish I had the finest uniform in the world for Bev, but this will have to do. (Her voice falters for a second). And---I'm making it myself.

Bev. Why, Fair, you know I wouldn't wear any uniform but this, even if I had a dozen. The buttons are those the boys gave me off their coats, and the rank on the sleeve is all embroidered. I wouldn't trade with any of them---not even General Morgan.

Char. (putting her arm around Fair). You precious little Fair, there's not a better uniform in all the South than this, but can't I help you with it? I'd love to; may I, dear?

Fair. If you'll show me how to put in the sleeve, I'd love it; but I'd rather do the work all by myself, please. You see, Bev's going to be such a great, brave soldier in this coat. I'd like to think I'd made it all myself.

[She begins to sew on the coat.

Char. I suppose I needn't ask in whose command you are going? I know you will say Morgan's. But how about your rank---will you be just a private?

Bev. Not just a private; though, of course, I'll be that if I can be nothing else. George told me when all was ready and my mother said I might, that I could come with him. I'd be one of the scouts, the color bearer; that's the place I want---(he grows more and more excited)---to hold the flag; to feel it was my own, my very own; to feel and touch and carry. Do you know, Charlotte, I believe I'd think George most as great a man as Morgan if he'd take me with him in his company and let me have the flag.

Char. Perhaps he will. I'll speak for you; he loves to do the things I want; and, yes, I'm sure he'll take you for his color-bearer.

Bev. Where's father, Fair? I must go tell him now before he goes away. He'll say that I can go; I know he will. And mother: I'll tell her, too. Where are they?

Fair (quietly). I think they're in the garden by Phil's grave. They always go there near this time.

[Exit Bev through gate.

Char. Oh, Fair, it's hard, hard for us all, and most of all for you. I sometimes wonder how you can be so brave. We've given Phil, and now your father and George and Carter and Gordon---all of them in the army. Now that Bev wants to go, I don't see how we can bear that.

Fair (quietly). I sometimes think of it, and then a great wave of terror seems to pass over me and leave me frantic at the thought. I feel as though I must tear things with my hands and scream, and go out too with them and fight---just to be near them. And then I feel ashamed to seem so weak. And then I think about the day they brought Phil's body home, and how mother didn't shed a tear. She looked so strange and white, as we walked down through the garden to the grave, I took her hand; it was like marble! Then she looked down at Bev on one side and at me close by her on the other, and softly smiled---smiled as she does when she is very proud and pleased. She spoke just as we came close by the grave. We three stood very near to Phil, and as they lifted him, she spoke: "He was the first, and I have loved him best," and then she smiled again, and softly drew away her hand and laid it for one moment on the coffin, as though caressing it. Then bending close down by his side, she spoke, as though to him: "Well done, my own soldier man! The heavenly hosts are proud of your enlistment!" (A pause). You wonder then that I'm ashamed to show my fear of losing Bev?

Char. Heroes like that are born---not made.

[Enter from the garden Mrs. S. and Col. S., and Bev who walks between them. He is talking eagerly, as though afraid of opposition. Col. S. looks troubled. Mrs. S. looks strangely pale and quiet.

Bev. And, father, you see it's nearly finished now. Of course, I'll wait till George has a place for me; but Fair and I just wanted to be all ready. She did it all herself. (He holds up the coat). And it fits too, all except one place, and she'll fix that. Oh, father, mother, you'll let me go---sometime---of course, not now---but when I'm needed.

Col. S. You shall go when the right time comes. When George comes, have your talk with him. First, your duty as a soldier is always to obey. Do as he says. Ride straight; you can do that already. Shoot straight; that you can learn. Live straight; that you will do. And last of all, if need be, boy, die with your face straight to the front.

Bev (clasping his hand and looking up into his face). Oh, father, if I only get the chance, I'll show you I can do them all!

Mrs. S. And when you've ridden and fought and lived as straight as I, your mother, know you will, there's one thing more for me to ask---(she softly lays her hand on his hair, looking down into his face)---Oh, little Bev, my own, own little boy, let your last ride be straight back home to me.

[She kisses him.

[During this last speech Aunt Marthy has come out on the porch with the supper bell in her hand. She is about to ring it when she pauses listening, looking off down the road.

Aunt M. 'Pears like I hears a hoss, er lot ob hosses. Dar de is, galloping on de gret rode!

[All the others turn to listen.

Col. S. They're cavalry, as sure as I'm living!

[Fair and Bev run to the gate and stand, eagerly looking down the road. The sound of horses' hoofs (off Right) grows louder and more distinct.

Bev (excited). They're some of our men, sure. I see the gray! Look, look, Fair! They're turning in the gate. See, now, they're in the avenue!

[Enter, hurriedly, Cupid (Left) by the road.

Cupid. I hears dem hosses, I does sho. I knows dat sorrel's gallup fer as I kin hear hit; dat roan's pace come to me fo' she turn off de road.

Char. George! Oh, can it be George coming home?

Cupid. Fo' Gaud, ef it ain't Mars George and Mars Carter and Mars Gordon!

[The sound of horses is very near.

Mrs. S. Oh, George! Is he really here?

Bev (gives cheer). It's our boys, sure as you're born!

[Noise of horses' feet stops. Sound of voices: "Whoa, boy! whoa there!" Cupid runs off (Right), the others start to the gate.

[Enter (Right) by the road, George Stuart, Carter Hillary and Gordon Cabell. George is a handsome young man of about twenty three or four; tall, well built, and with a gay, cheerful manner. He rushes into his mother's arms; she holds him for a long embrace, while Fair and Bev clamor for their turn. Carter Hillary is a young fellow of about twenty-one, Charlotte's brother, somewhat smaller though much like George in manner. He rushes to Charlotte, who throws her arms around his neck. Gordon Cabell is a boy of some twenty-five years, with a quiet, serious way about him. He stands slightly at the back during the meeting of the others. He then comes forward and greets all the people in the scene, not forgetting the negroes. All three wear Confederate uniforms of different rank, and all are very dirty and much spattered with old mud stains. During the following scene the sunlight begins to fade and the twilight to gather. After greeting all three young men with a warm hand-shake and a hearty "Gaud bless you, honey," or "Gaud be praised, yous here," Aunt Marthy exits into

the house.

Mrs. S. Oh, my boys! My dear boys! It is so good to have you here!

George. And, father, how's the leg---nearly well again?

Col. S. How have you boys come? We had no idea you were even near us.

George. We've only a short time. My company is reconnoitering and is camped a mile down the road. We must go on to-night. Carter and Gordon are with us for a day or so. They're trying for some information Morgan has to have.

Carter. We got word only yesterday that the Twelfth Massachusetts was ordered South. Morgan thinks the report true and sent Gordon and myself to reconnoiter.

Col. S. You think the Twelfth Massachusetts is coming to this part of the state? How did he hear it? (Turns to Mrs S.) Stephen Winthrop is in command.

[Fair, who has been talking to Carter, turns quickly, listening.

Mrs. S. Not Stephen, our own cousin, in arms against the South! And coming here!

Col. S. His father is a Northern man; we must not judge for him.

Fair (to George). Why must you go back to the camp to-night?

George. We have a long march for to-morrow. Our leave of absence is only for two hours.

Mrs. S. Then we must lose no time. You boys are hungry; I am sure of it. Come into the house and we'll talk while you eat.

[They start towards the house. George and Charlotte are behind the rest. He takes her hand, speaking softly only to her.

George. Wait with me here for just a moment. (Then to his mother); We'll come, in just a moment, mother.

Mrs. S. (smiles at him then, as the others enter house). I'll call you when we are ready.

[Exit.

[Charlotte turns, facing him; he takes her other hand, looking long and lovingly into her face.

Char. I can hardly think you're real. But you are here: you have come back to me.

George. And if the time has been long to you, how about me there in the camp?

Char. I try not to think about that part---only of how I love you! That makes up to me for all the rest.

George. We can't think of ourselves in times like these. But I may think of you. You're in my heart each moment of the day and in my dreams at night (He bends over her). My own sweetheart, I wonder if you know or even guess how dear you are to me!

Char. I measure your love with my own for you. That's fair enough, and so I think---I think I know how much you love me.

[George has been leaning tenderly over her as she sits on the bench. He now comes and sits beside her, taking one of her hands in both his own.

George. I want your promise for one thing---one thing that will make me the happiest, proudest man in the world.

Char. What more can I promise you? I've given you myself. What more---

George (impulsively leaning closer to her). Marry me to-night!

Char. To-night! Why, I---I---

George. Yes, to-night! We may go for a long campaign South. I may not come again for months. Let me be sure you are my own before I go. I'll get the chaplain here in half an hour.

Char. To-night! But, George, I---I---of course, I'll marry you if you think best, but---

George (delighted). But what? Nothing in all the world can matter if you marry me to-night.

Char. But I haven't any dress.

George (laughing). What does that matter? Why not the one you have on now? I never saw you look more lovely.

Char. Oh, I have one other: a nicer one than this (happily). Well, this will do if it pleases you.

[He gently puts his arm around her.

George. As if I cared. We'll tell them all and have the wedding. You've only twenty minutes now to make your wedding dress.

[Laughs, leans over, and kisses her.

Char. If my dear father were only here! But he's far down in Alabama with his regiment.

George. I thank God you are here with mother and little Fair and Bev.

Char. George, I promised Bev to ask you something. He's going off to fight. I know he's young, but there are younger boys than he who make brave soldiers. He wants to be your color-bearer.

George. I was afraid he wouldn't stay at home much longer. But it shall be as he wishes. I'll see the place is given him, when father says that he may go. We must go in and tell them the great news.

[They start to the house.

[Enter Bev from the house. He runs down into the steps towards them.

Bev. I say, Charlotte, have you asked him?

Char. (laughing). No, he asked me.

George. We're going to be married here to-night.

Bev. What---really! Oh, but I'm glad! I knew it was going to be, but I didn't know it would be to-night. Does mother know?

Char. We're going in to tell her now. And, Bev, I asked for your appointment, and some day, before so very long, I'm quite sure you may have it.

Bev (delighted). You are as great a man as Morgan. And will I be the color-bearer, and go with you on the marches, and sleep by the camp fire, and have my rations with your men?

George (gaily). But you must promise not to overeat or oversleep. We live in such great style, we Morgan men. Come in; let's tell them all. (They exit into the house.

Bev. Hello! there's Gordon. (Enter Gordon from the road). I came out to look for you. Have you had supper?

Gordon. Yes, I wanted to look about for a minute or so. I haven't been here for a long time now. Well, everything's the same. Do you know, Bev, I love this place as though it were my home.

[Enter Fair from the house, excited.

Fair. Oh! Bev, Bev, have you heard!

Bev. Yes; isn't it splendid!

Gordon. What is it?

Fair. Oh, haven't you heard about the wedding?

Gordon (slowly, as though anxious). What wedding?

Fair. George and Charlotte. They're going to be married here to-night. It's too lovely. I'm to be the maid of honor and Carter is to be best man. And mother and Charlotte are fixing up her dress with flowers. Isn't it splendid!

Bev. I'm going in to help. Maybe he'll let me ride down to the camp to get the chaplain.

[Exit into the house.

Fair. Come, let us go in, too, and help about the wedding.

Gordon. Fair, will you wait here with me? I've something I must say to you before we go in there.

Fair (surprised). Something you must say to me; I don't quite understand.

Gordon. Then, may I tell you now?

Fair. Had we not better wait for just a little? I've promised
Carter---

Gordon (drawing back). You've promised Carter---what?

Fair (surprised). To go with him to get some flowers.

Gordon (relieved). Oh, only that. Well, I will wait. Only till you get the flowers, remember. I'll walk down through the garden. You won't be long?

Fair. He's coming in a minute. (Exit Gordon by gate into garden. Fair stands quietly for a moment, then covers her face with her hands; when she speaks, her voice is very strange). Coming here! Coming here! Oh, Steve, I cannot bear it! I cannot bear it! (slowly gazing off before her). And as our enemy---you whom I have loved---whom I now love!

[Enter Carter from the house.

Carter. Isn't it great about the wedding?

Fair (quickly trying to hide her grief of a moment before). Yes, yes, I am so glad. But we must get the flowers for her, at the bushes here by the house.

Carter. Aunt Marthy brought in all the roses she can want. And, Fair, I spoke about the flowers for just this chance of seeing you alone. We soldiers snatch our happiness when best we can. I've come to ask you for the greatest thing in all this world. I must ask now. (She turns away; he takes her hand). I love you---I love you! Fair, I fancied it would be hard for me to say those three little words, but it is not hard---it is very easy. I love you dearer than everything in the world. Fair, look at me. Surely, you have guessed this love. Look at me!

[She slowly faces him, drawing her hand away.

Fair (her voice very soft). You love me! You, Carter, my own dear cousin! You love me! Oh, Carter, I never thought---I never, never dreamed that it could be!

Carter. But now you must not dream. I say again I love you! It is so easy to say that to you now. Say you love me!

Fair (quietly and with an effort at calmness). Of course, I love you, Carter. You are my cousin, my kinsman, my own dear friend. Why, ever since I can remember I have loved you. But---but---such love as this you ask for now---Oh, Carter, can't you see---I cannot love you in that way.

Carter. But you can learn. Oh, surely, you can learn to love me! I've loved you for so long! It won't be hard to show you how that love can grow. Why, ever since you were a tiny little girl, I have loved you and watched over you and taken care of you. Do you remember that day, so many years ago, when you ran away and walked far down the road to meet your father? You thought you would surprise him as he came back home from town. You never thought how far

you were from home. You walked and walked until you were so tired you sat down by the road to wait. It was growing late, and you were frightened at the darkness coming on, and you began to cry---for you were such a little girl, and it was getting very dark. And then I came along and found you. You thought at first I was a bear; but when I spoke, you ran right into my arms and kissed me, and said you were so glad I'd come to take you home. Ever since that day I've loved you---loved with all my heart, with all my soul! Now, I must give this love to you. Look at me---speak to me---say you will try! Say I may keep you in my heart, as I have done ever since that day, so many years ago!

[Fair has stood looking off into the sunset. She turns slowly, then speaks.

[Gordon enters at gate unseen by them.

Fair (in a very low voice). Carter, you know I love and trust you, and you know it's like tearing my heart strings to tell you this. But it is because I love and trust you as I do that I must tell you. (Slowly)--I cannot give my heart, or my life to you. They are not mine! Now!

Carter (slowly realizing). You mean---

Fair (in agony). I love him---

Carter (in a strange voice). I may not ask you---who?

Fair. Better no, my dearest Carter.

Carter (turns to the house, all the life and happiness gone from his face). Will you come in? We have not long before the wedding.

[Exit into house.

[Gordon comes slowly to Fair who has sunk down upon the bench, sobbing softly to herself.

Gordon. Fair!

[She looks up quickly.

Fair. Gordon! You heard---you heard what we said!

Gordon. Only that your love was not for one of us.

Fair (dazed). For---one---of---us. (Looking up into his face)---Gordon, do you love me, too? And you have heard!

Gordon. You must forgive me, even though you find that happiness with one who is our enemy.

Fair (shrinking wildly back). You know---you have found out! How have you learned that I---that we---

Gordon. It was not hard to see. (He comes nearer, laying his hand softly on her hair). Poor little pretty Fair! I saw then that he loved you; and all too clearly I see now that you love him.

Fair (taking one of his hands in both her own). You will not tell! (He turns quickly away). Gordon! Gordon! Forgive me! I didn't mean it---Oh, I didn't mean it! I'm only so afraid! Mother and father must not know! (She looks up into his face). He is our enemy!

Gordon. I love you, Fair! I understand.

[They slowly exit into the house.

[The sunset shows in brilliant red and gold at the back of scene, fading into purple twilight and then to brilliant moonlight through the rest of the scene. Enter Cupid from the road. He sits on the lowest step and begins to fill his pipe. As he is pressing in the tobacco, far off (Right) a bugle call is heard. The pipe falls from his hands. He pauses, listening. The call is heard again; this time a little nearer. Cupid jumps to his feet, runs up steps, throwing open the door.

Cupid (as he starts up steps). Fo' Gaud! hits dem Yankees! (He throws open the door). Marster! Marster! Mars George, de Yankees comin'!

[Enter Aunt Marthy hurriedly.

Cupid (very excited). Dey's comin'---de Yankees! Marster! Marster!

Marthy. What in de name ob Gaud's de matter wid you?

[Enter Bev, Carter, George and Gordon. They run down into the yard.

Bev. What's the matter?

Cupid. I hears a bugle. It's de Yankees! For Gaud's sake, run---run, Marster: dey'll catch you sho!

Gordon. Listen! (The call is heard again, this time nearer). They're Yankees, sure! Here---call Colonel Stuart, quick!

[Enter Col. and Mrs. Stuart, followed by Charlotte and Fair. Charlotte wears a white dress trimmed with flowers, and looks extremely lovely.

Col. S. What is it?

George. The enemy! They're on the road!

Char. Cupid, the horses! Do you hear!

Bev. I'll get father's for him.

[Exit Bev and Cupid on the run.

Mrs. S. Run! Fly! You've not a moment!

Fair. The horses are saddled at the gate. There's Cupid with them.

Col. S. Go, boys, quick, to join the others. You must retreat--you are too few.

Gordon. We will not leave till you are ready.

Col. S. For God's sake, go! I'll come.

[Enter Bev on the run.

Bev. They're Yankees, sure! I saw the dust far down the road.

Col. S. (takes Mrs. S. in arms for a second; kisses her). God keep you!

[George is saying good-bye to Charlotte.

Char. Go on! go on! You must not stop for us. We are all safe.
God take you on to safety.

Gordon. We're all right; don't fear.

[They dash off (Left), Bev with them.

Bev (outside). I'll take care of them, father.

[The horses' hoofs are heard; they die away in the distance.

[Re-enter Bev.

Bev. They're off all right. They'll make the camp in twenty minutes.

Fair (clinging to Mrs. S.). Oh, mother, what can we do!

Mrs. S. Cupid, quick! You and Marthy get the silver; put it in the chest; bring me the key. (Exit Marthy and Cupid). We must be brave. Try to detain them as long as possible; our boys may have more time.

[The bugle-call is heard very near, then the sound of horses' hoofs growing louder.

Char. Is there nothing we can do to stop them? Stay, they'll come here to the house; we'll lock them out.

[Enter Marthy and Cupid.

Marthy. We grabbed up what we could an' shuved de ches' onder de baid.

[Gives key.

Mrs. S. Here, let me lock the door. (She locks the door; puts key in her pocket). We'll stand here on the porch. Now, children, keep close by me; they shall not harm you. If only we can keep them!

[They stand in a little group on the porch, Cupid with an ax, and he and Marthy behind the others.

A Man's Voice. Here, this way!

Another. Here's the house!

Another. Come on!

[Enter a party of Union soldiers headed by Corporal Evans, an insolent young fellow of about twenty-five. He has a very boisterous manner, giving his orders with a swagger.

Evans. Here's Southern hospitality for you. A party out to meet us (they all come forward, some crashing through the shrubs, breaking down the fence, some walk through flower beds. They come up to the porch). Hello, ladies! (without removing his cap) Come on, boys!

[He starts up the steps; other soldiers have come on; some join the group near steps, others go around the house. Mrs. S. takes a step forward, her head held very high.

Mrs. S. I beg your pardon, sir!

[Evans stops, then laughs in an insolent manner.

Evans. What are you doing out here on the front porch, anyway?

Mrs. S. I always receive my visitors at my front door.

Evans. Visitors, eh? Well, we'll make ourselves at home.

Mrs. S. You are are mistaken, sir!

Evans. We are going in there.

Mrs. S. You are not!

[The man tries to push past her, but Cupid steps forward with the ax.

Cupid (in a rage). You darsent tuch my mistis!

Evans. I'll break your head in, damn you!

[He starts to strike him with his sword. Mrs. S. steps quickly between them.

Mrs. S. You will not dare to touch my servant.

Evans (very angry). Get him out of the way, then, or I'll show you.

[Here the door of the house is kicked open from within. Several soldiers enter from house.

A Soldier. We're in from the back way. Come on!

[Mrs. S., Charlotte, Fair, Bev, Cupid and Marthy come down into yard and cross to the garden gate. All the soldiers except the corporal and two or three others exit into house.

Evans. I'll stay out here with the ladies (laughs). What's past that gate?

Mrs. S. My garden, sir.

Evans. Men, I believe they are hiding some one here. What's in that garden?

Mrs. S. The memory of my blessed dead.

Evans. What!

Mrs. S. My son, sir.

Evans. Where is he? (Quickly).

Mrs. S. Beyond your reach. His grave is in the garden.

Evans (in an uneasy way steps back). I---I beg your pardon, mam!

[Enter from the house all the soldiers. They carry a large cedar chest. Others have china, pictures, rugs, some furniture and ornaments. These they throw roughly on the ground. Nearly all are eating. They throw the chest lid back and lift out the silver, quarreling loudly for its possession.

Cupid. Fo' Gaud, ef de ain't got de silber!

[Horses hoofs are heard, but the men are too engrossed to notice.

[Enter hurriedly from the lane Col. Stephen Winthrop and Maurice Hopkins. Winthrop is a handsome, soldierly young man of about twenty-five. He wears the regular U.S. uniform of Colonel. Hopkins is younger and somewhat smaller than Winthrop, though a handsome, manly-looking fellow. They rush in among the men, beating them over the backs with sabers.

Winthrop (in great anger). You damned cowards! Get out! Every one of you shall be court-martialed.

Hopkins. Fine soldiers, you dogs! You'll pay for this.

[The soldiers stand in frightened groups.

Winth. I was detained. Who's in command?

Hop. Corporal Evans.

[Evans salutes.

Winth. Consider yourself under arrest.

Hop. (looks toward the house). The old place, too.

Winth. An outrage! Back to your horses and wait there. Where are the people?

[Exit soldiers.

[They turn and discover the group at the gate. They quickly advance.

Winth. (delighted). Mrs. Stuart, how can we say how we regret this intrusion.

[He offers his hand. Mrs. S. looks at him for a moment as though she does not recognize him, then draws back.

Mrs. S. My home is yours by right of conquest.

Winth. (stops) No. I beg of you---

Mrs. S. We await your pleasure, sir.

Winth. (falling back a step). Surely you have forgotten; we were once your guests.

Mrs. S. We have not forgotten, sir; nor can we soon forget.

Winth. (greatly grieved). Once you welcomed us. I know I wear the uniform---yet, I am still your friend, your kinsman.

Mrs. S. I claim no kin with those who take up arms against the South.

[Enter Evans, hurriedly.

Evans. Word has come that our regiment has met the enemy one mile away. They're engaging now. Hark to the guns!

[The distant sound of guns.

Winth. Boots and saddles, quick!

[Exit Evans on run.

I beg your pardon for intruding, madam. You shall not be troubled in this way again.

[He and Hopkins exit hurriedly. The horses hoofs are heard as they gallop away. They stand silently listening. Fair throws her arms around her mother's neck, sobbing.

Fair. Oh, mother! mother!

Char. We must not fear; there's no time for that.

Fair. Oh, I am not afraid.

Bev. Have our men had time? They must have reached the camp to give the warning.

Mrs. S. The fighting can't last long, so few men are engaged. But those who are will need our aid if they are wounded. Come in; we'll be prepared to help.

Char. (at the gate, looking off to where the shots are heard). I cannot go inside---I cannot.

Mrs. S. (her arm around Charlotte). Please God, he'll come back to you, dear.

[She exits into house with Marthy and Cupid, while Fair and Bev remain with Charlotte at the gate.

Bev. The firing's stopped; 'twas only a skirmish. Our men ought to be safe by now. Winthrop had only a few men with him, reconnoitering.

Fair. He---didn't have time to get into the fight, did he?

Bev. I suppose not. The men went first.

Fair. Ah---

[Re-enter Mrs. S. with Cupid and Marthy from the house.

Mrs. S. The fight could not have been more than a mile away.
We'll have some news before so very long.

Bev. Oh, let me, mother; I'll ride down and see.

Mrs. S. No, Bevie, no. You must stay here. We have you yet.

Bev (quietly). I'll stay, mother.

Char. (who has been straining her eyes through the dusk, turns quickly). I hear a horse; it's running. Ah, God! let this be news.

[Horse's hoofs are heard rapidly approaching.

Fair. It cannot be so soon.

Bev. It is; it is. He's coming up the avenue. It's Winthrop. He's riding for his life!

Fair. Steve! For his life---God!

[The horse's hoofs stop; enter Winthrop hurriedly.

Winth. (removing hat). I grieve to tell you, madam, that your son George is badly wounded. You must go to him at once.

Char. George! Come, mother; come while there is time!

Winth. I met a man sent back to say it was only a skirmish. All save a few escaped. But your son was the first man in the attack.

Mrs. S. (to Cupid). Get me the carriage.

[Exit hurriedly Cupid and Marthy.

Bev. In a second, mother.

[He runs off after Cupid.

Char. (comes slowly before Winthrop, gazing up into his face, her voice almost a whisper). Dead?

Winth. Badly wounded.

Char. Ah! Quick, mother, your wrap!

Fair. I'll get it. Wait.

[She runs into the house.

Winth. One moment---your passport. Here (he writes on a card, gives to Mrs. S.). Show this if you are halted.

Mrs. S. I thank you, sir, for your kindness to me.

[She offers hand.

Winth. (takes hand). My pleasure, madam.

Char. And my thanks, sir.

[He bows to her.

Fair (enters with the wrap, placing it about her shoulders). Oh, mother, bring him back to me!

[Enter Cupid.

Cupid. Missus, de cerrige is ready.

Mrs. S. Try and get me there, Cupid.

Cupid. I gwine get you dar ef de Lord spars me.

[Exit Mrs. S., Charlotte and Cupid. Winthrop stands looking in a longing way at Fair, who follows her mother with her eyes 'till she is off, then she slowly turns.

Fair. We owe you more than we can ever pay. Won't you come in and rest?

Winth. (comes closer as though to take her hand). You, too, Fair?

Fair. What else? You are our---enemy!

Winth. (his voice choked with passion). No. God knows I wear this uniform because I think it right. But if it make me an enemy to you, I would to God I'd never seen it. You loved me once, Fair. Two years is not so very long---yet have you changed? Ah! no, no. You cannot look at me like that and say you hate me!

[With a sudden, wild impulse, Fair has drawn very near to him.

Fair (draws back with an effort). I must not. You hear me! I must not.

Winth. But if you love me, Fair.

Fair (looks up with a strange, wild, longing look in her face, then quickly covers her eyes with her hand. She is trembling so, she can hardly stand. She raises her face to his: all the passion is none; she is paler than the dead. Her words come slowly, hardly above a whisper). But I---don't love you!

[Winthrop takes a step backward, his face very white and drawn. He slowly loosens the clasp of her hand as---

The curtain falls.

ACT II.

The parlor of the Stuart home. A large room with high ceiling and carved doors and mantels. The room, when in order, is beautiful in every appointment. The furniture, old mahogany, the hangings and ornaments are handsome and in good taste. Now, however, the furniture is piled together, as though for moving; the pictures, down from their places, stand against the wall; some cut through with sabers. Many of the chairs are broken and overturned. A large sofa is against the wall; this has been slit open and all the bedding torn out. A table left near it, and by the sofa a large fire chair. At the back and near the right stands the great cedar chest. It, as well as the other things, was carried out by the soldiers in Act I. On the right, a desk with writing materials. On the left (back) a door. At back (center) double doors, with heavy curtains, leading to the hall where may be seen a large "grandfather clock," the face smashed in, as though with an ax. On the right, a large bay window with two steps leading up to it, looking out on the moonlit garden. It is after dusk, three days later than Act I. The curtain rises on an empty stage. There is a dreary half light over everything.

[Enter from the hall Cupid and Marthy. He has a candle in a heavy iron candlestick in his hand. She carries a large woolen blanket. They speak in subdued voices, very low.

Cupid (placing candle near the chest). Missus say ter bring the silber up stairs ter her room. She feard it ain't safe down here.

Marthy (spreads the blanket she carries on the floor, and together they lift out the silver during the following dialogue). 'Tain't nothin' safe round here, now dem Yankees is come.

[Cupid pauses a moment.

Cupid. I sho was glad when mistus sent for me and speak rite out 'bout de silber. 'Pears like hit de fust thing she er Miss Charlotte done notice.

Marthy. Dey ant neither one ob um cry. Dat what worry me. Ef dey could bof brek rite down and have er good long cry, hit ud do um a power er good.

[A slight pause.

Cupid. I got um dar in time, please Gaud. He let dis ole nigger do dat much fer Mars George. He ax bout us all, Old Missus say, in de few minutes he had lef. He say he powerful glad we git dar.

Marthy. It's de Lord's will, 'nd hits rite, but hit pears like we don had little mo den our share ob de trouble. Dar de silber, hits ready. You pack it up to Mistus, and ax her can't I fix her little somethin' ter eat. I don't know what hits gwine ter

be.

Cupid (brightening). Would she eat a piece ob nice young chicken?

Marthy. Go way, nigger, don't I know dar ant bin no chicken nor nothin' else fer Old Mistus ter eat on this place fer more dan a month; what you come round here talking bout chicken fer?

Cupid. Kin you keep you mouth shet bout somethin if I tells you?

Marthy (on her guard). Dat pens on what hits bout.

Cupid. I got a chicken, three fo on um, and some flour and some butter, too. I tell you mistus gwine get chicken ef dars chicken lef in dis world.

Marthy (suspicious). Whar did you get hit?

Cupid. I went down dar long twods whar de Yankees campin yestiddy. I powerful skerd, yet I bleged to go, cause I got ter git somethin for mistus ter eat, and de very fust person I meet war Mars Winthrop. Pears like he don come down de lane by hisself, and he standin down dar at de bars at de end ob de lane, lookin way off twods de house. Pears like he studyin bout somethin. He mighty sorrowful and lonesom lookin. He suprised ter see me, but he ax me rite off how de people was and most pintedly bout ole mistus and Miss Fair. Den he ax me how dey stand de trouble dat come to um, and ax me ant dar nothin on de earth he can do. Cos I tell we all well and dat we din't need nothin, cause I ant gwine ter tell him dar ant nothin lef sep hog meat and corn meal. Well, sir, dat white man he tek me rite in de tent and gib me a gret basket full ub de bes dey had and say hit fer me ter tek home ter you, but hit pears like he onderstand mighty well, and he gib me a dollar and mek me promise not ter say nothin bout see him. Dat how I come ter had de chicken fer mistus. He powerful good white man if he is er Yankeeey.

Marthy. Whar dat basket? Git hit. Mistus ant touch nothin cep a little tea fer days, and Miss Charlotte she jest set dar at de winder lookin so white and still. She ant war no dress cep dat white one jes like she gwine get married. She ant realise hit somehow. Soon as de flowers wilt she put fresh ones in de place (she turns to Cupid). Get me de basket and tek hit to de kitchen. Dem chillun shan't go hungry (she looks about the room). I got ter fix dis some way (she begins to straighten room). I's glad dem Yankees ant get ter mistus room. I bleged ter get dis lookin better fo mistus see it. She ant bin in here since she come home.

Cupid. Mars Winthrop sure anxious ter do somethin fer we all. Pears like he most es griev as we is bout Mars George. I don fix up little sprise fo um.

Marthy. What you know 'bout sprisin'? Why don you git de basket?

Cupid. I don hear Mistus say she anxious ter see Mars Winthrop and Mars Hopkins, so she kin thank um ter all dey don---gitten de ambulance wagen and sendin' de soldiers ter tek ker ob de place. And when I seed um, I tole him Mistus want see him. He brighten up mighty, and say dey come over har ter night. Now, don't you let on.

Marthy. Cose I ain't. Go on, nigger, wid de silber.

[Exit Cupid with silver.

Hit's somethin' ter git de minds off de trouble; It'll do um a power er good.

[Enter Fair from the hall; she is very pale and tired looking; she wears a simple little black dress; her hair tied with a black ribbon; all her youthful gaiety is gone; she seems suddenly to have become a woman. Her voice has a tired, pathetic sound, as though she were constantly fighting for her self-control.

Fair (timidly looking around her, as though afraid). I have been afraid to come in here before. It's very bad, isn't it, Marthy?

Marthy. I was jes tryin' ter get hit lookin' little better fo' you seed it.

Fair (wearily). No matter, Marthy; leave it as it is. I'll help you to-morrow.

Marthy. I reckon I better git dem pictures up in de attic fo' your mar see um.

[She takes up one picture, mutilated beyond recognition, and tries to cover it with her apron.

Fair. What is it, Marthy?

Marthy. 'Tain't nothin', honey. You go on back ter your mar and let old Marthy get things straight.

Fair (with an effort). Let me see it--I'd rather, please. (She holds out her hand; Marthy gives her the picture). Oh, Marthy, not even this. They couldn't even leave his picture.

Marthy. Dar, my lamb; don't you cry when you bin so brave. Dars a nother picture of Mars George in yo' mar's room. (She draws Fair's head down upon her knee, stroking her hair). My blessed chile---my lamb!

Fair (raising her face and trying to stop her tears). There, there, that was very foolish, and I won't any more. Take this away and hide it.

[Marthy takes picture, rolls it in her apron, and starts to door.

[Enter Bev from the hall. He, too, is very changed. All his boyish gaiety is covered with a deep sorrow. He tries to speak cheerfully to comfort her.

Fair. Oh, Bev, I've been wishing so you'd come.

[She goes quickly to him. He puts his arm around her, comforting her.

Marthy. Why don't you chullen go out fer a little walk. Mars Bev'll tek good care of you. It ud do you good, honey.

Fair (looks towards the window). Oh, no; not out there.

Bev. We'll be all right here; don't you worry, Marthy.

[Exit Marthy.

Fair. Bev, have you spoken to Charlotte?

Bev. Yes; she and mother seem so much better now. She's taken off the white dress and put on the black one. Mother said they both had so much left to live for. And Charlotte smiled and called me to her, and asked if the soldiers were still here, and if my uniform was finished, and begged me not to be unhappy. And she told me George was just as much ours as he had ever been, and told me how proud she was when all the soldiers told her he had been the first one in the fight.

Fair. I am so glad. Oh, Bev, it broke my heart! I felt as though we couldn't give George, too.

Bev. But we must think first of the South. We've given Phil and George now---father, if it must be---and then I'll go; but he and I'll come back to you.

[Enter at the back Mrs. S. and Charlotte; they walk hand in hand.

Charlotte wears a black dress like Fair's. Mrs. S. wears the costume she wore in Act I. Charlotte's color has come back, and she seems almost herself save for a slightly strained note in her voice.

Char. We are so glad to find you here. We came to see what had been left us---not very much. Well, we four are still together, and we have the home.

Mrs. S. This does not matter; we must not think of little things. But we have father yet, and Carter and Gordon. God willing, we will have them safe again with us.

Char. (softly, with deep, tender emotion). And George, mother, we have him still; he is not gone. I tell you, my own sweetheart is not away, and every day that passes brings me nearer to him. For he is still my own true George; he's with me now; yes, now. And I may keep him ever with me, here.

[She softly lays her hand over her heart.

Mrs. S. (gently drawing her nearer). My own dear daughter, may we have strength to feel he is not gone. Dear child, you have shown us all how George would have us live.

[She kisses her.

Char. There, mother, there. Now what can we do to make things brighter here. First, some light (she lights the candles). There, that's better. Ah, the room will take us many days, I fear.

Bev (helping them with the furniture). Mother, did you know that Winthrop has had a man stationed near the house for our protection? I've been wanting to see him to say how we thank him, but he has been very busy in the camp.

Fair. Is he still there?

Bev. Yes. The whole regiment is stationed there now.

Mrs. S. We will see him before they go away. Perhaps we can show him in some way that we are very grateful.

Char. He sent the ambulance to us when there was only one, and he gave a guard to see us safely through the lines, and even when we were at home he asked that we would keep the guard for our protection. Yes, mother, we must thank him for all this. And George would wish it so, I'm sure of it.

Fair (softly). Will he come here again; oh, mother, will he come?

[Enter Marthy with a table cloth over her arm.

Marthy. I don't fix a little surprise for you all. I gwine gib you de best supper. Kin I fix it har for you?

[She spreads the cloth on the table.

Mrs. S. Why, Marthy, I'd forgotten. But is there anything for us except corn meal?

Marthy (delighted). You jes wait an see. I gwine gib you what you used to---dat I iz.

[Exit.

Mrs. S. Dear old Marthy. I often think---(a knock is heard at the door (Left). What was that?

Bev. Some one at the door.

Mrs. S. Impossible! it leads to your room.

[The knock again.

Bev. Who's there? (he opens the door) Who's in here?

Carter (within). Are you all there?

Bev. What do you mean? Come out!

[Enter Carter disguised. He wears a black beard, a hat pulled far over his eyes, and old, rough clothes and a very shabby U.S. Army cloak; he has a pack on his back: he looks about, sees only the family, throws down the pack, tearing off his hat and beard.

Carter. Charlotte! Aunt!

[They pause for a moment, then rush to him.

Char. Carter!

Carter. Shut that window---quick!

[Fair runs to window, draws curtains.

Mrs. S. Carter! How have you come? Do you know---

Carter. Yes. I know they're out there still. That is why I am here.

Char. A spy! Oh, God!

Carter. I'm safe so far. I've been all through the camp dressed as a pedler. I got the plans; all Morgan has to know. Have you seen Winthrop? Does he come here?

Mrs. S. No.

Carter. Thank God! Then I can stay till midnight.

Mrs. S. Where have you been the past three days?

Carter. We've been hiding in a cane-brake two miles down the river. Uncle and Gordon are with me; the others went back to Morgan. As soon as I get to him with the plans of Winthrop's forces, he will attack. Have you a horse here?

Bev. Yes, Tony; you can take him.

Carter. We thought the enemy had gone on down the river. If I could get the plans, I was to take them on to Morgan, and they to follow. Here, take the paper, Charlotte. I must not lose a minute. Bring that candle. (He gives Charlotte a paper).

[Fair brings candle and holds it for Charlotte to read.

I must not carry that. 'Twould mean my certain death if I were captured. I run the chances as it is. Here, see if I know it?

Char. (opens paper). Begin.

Carter (reciting). "Twelfth Massachusetts, under Winthrop's command, stationed on south bank of Aspen river, two miles below station known as Fairmount Junction. Evident plans for encampment of some days. Long hill, covered with scrub pine and bushes, on right. Affords excellent cover. Aspen river on left. Too deep to attempt ford. Large encampment. Valuable stores. Pickets stationed quarter mile out on all roads." Is that right?

Char. Yes, you know it--you are sure?

Carter. I've said it over to myself until I know it backward.
Burn it.

Char. The candle, Fair. (She holds paper in flame until destroyed; she tears remaining bits). Is there any more?

Carter. Yes, but I am sure of it all. If I can only get to Morgan with it, we can wipe them from existence.

Fair. You mean you'd kill them all?

Carter. I've learned more than just the location of the enemy.

Fair. What else?

Carter. I have Winthrop's plans.

Fair (almost in a whisper). How?

Carter. I stole them from his tent.

Fair. You have them with you?

Carter. I memorized and then destroyed them. (He turns to Mrs. S.). What time is it?

Mrs. S. About seven.

Carter. Uncle and Gordon may come on here. We were almost certain the camp had moved. If they do not come before I leave, watch out and take them in.

Mrs. S. When were they coming?

Carter. Later. We thought it best not to travel all together.

Mrs. S. Are they disguised?

Carter. No; but they know the road so well, they'll not be captured.

Mrs. S. God grant it!

Carter. Can you get me some food? I'm nearly starved. I had only what we could kill to eat.

Mrs. S. Of course; I might have known. Fair, come with me.

[They start towards the door, when voices are heard in the hall outside. Mrs. S. pauses in terror. She turns to Fair, unable to speak.

Cupid (outside). Yes, Marster, dey's in dar. Come right in, sir. Dey be dat glad ter see you.

Winth. (without). Are you sure we're not intruding?

Char. God in heaven, Winthrop! Quick, Carter, here! (She pushes him into the high back chair near (Left), snatches the cloth from the table, throwing it partly over chair, concealing him. Stands facing the door).

[Bev snatches cloak and pack, throwing them behind sofa.

(In a low voice). Be calm; it means his life.

Cupid (at door). Rite in har, Marster. (He draws curtains.
Winthrop and Hopkins stand on the threshold. Then proudly)---Mars
Winthrop and Mars Hopkins, Mistus.

[The men advance.

Winth. I trust we do not intrude. Your servant told me you had expressed a wish to see us.

Mrs. S. (quickly). It is a great pleasure to see you here again. You must feel that you are welcome, for I have much to thank you for.

Winth. (taking her hand). Would to God I could have done more, madam.

Mrs. S. No, no: you must not speak so to me. We will go back to the old times before the trouble came. I was Cousin Lucy to you then; so let it be as it has always been.

Hop. (offering hand). Have we a right to such a welcome?

Mrs. S. Your right has always been our greatest pleasure. But the room here is a poor place in its condition. Fair, take them to the dining room. It is better there.

Fair. Yes, yes; come with me.

Winth. Surely there is something we can do to make amends for this. (He looks about the room). And surely in return for your great kindness, you will allow---

Mrs. S. No, no; I tell you, you must think no more of that. We are your friends now, your kinsmen. There is nothing you can do, for you have done enough. I pray now you will go with Fair into the dining room and let her offer you refreshment. And Mr. Hopkins, you must go with them. We'll come, in just a moment.

Hop. Certainly, madam.

[He starts to the door.

Winth. I am distressed beyond all words to see this condition of your home. (He comes to the sofa, very near the chair). You must let my company have your furniture repaired. Too bad. Too bad.

[He looks at the other things.

Mrs. S. (almost hysterical). Believe me this does not matter. Now, if you will let Fair take you to the dining room---

Winth. You'll come with us, Miss Charlotte?

Char. In just a moment, sir.

[He starts to the door. The sofa is partially before him. He turns and comes in front of the chair where Carter is concealed.

Winth. (stops with a great start, gazing at Carter). My God!

[Charlotte shrinks back, wild with terror. Hopkins turns at door.

Hop. (coming forward quickly). What is it?

[Carter rises from the chair, despairing, yet with simple dignity.

Carter. I surrender, sir!

Hop. Hillary! (He turns to Winthrop). It is---

Winth. The worst!

[Charlotte comes slowly before Winthrop. She is very white. She tries to speak, but her lips give no sound. She comes nearer.

Char. My brother! In God's name what will you do? (Winthrop turns away). Speak! What will it mean?

Winth. (slowly, with a tremendous effort). That we---

Char. The worst!

Winth. The best that I can do.

Char. (a wild gleam of hope in her face). You will save him. You can do this for us; say he will live; we ask no more than that. His life--you hear--his life; give that to me!

Carter (gently putting his arm around her). Hush, dearest. That must be enough. I am his prisoner. You must not ask for that which in honor he must refuse.

Char. (breaking wildly from him). You hear, mother; Fair, you hear. Speak to him. Ah, he cannot refuse. Speak to him. Down on your knees, if it must be. Mother, go to him. It is my brother's life!

Hop. (to Winthrop). There's nothing else---for us?

Winth. Our duty. Help me, boy. God knows I need it.

Mrs. S. (coming before Winthrop; speaking in a low, strained voice). We await your pleasure. Is there nothing you can do? In the happy memory of the days that are not deeply buried in the past, in memory of the love we bore to you; in memory of the state that gave you birth---and that has always held a home for you; in memory of all this, say what you can do for us. If you take him, then tear out our hearts and take them too. Oh, surely, there is something you can do. Speak now, for those who are your kinsmen and have loved you await your answer.

[Winthrop has stood gazing off before him, his hands clenched at his side. Breathing heavily he turns to them.

Winth. My duty to the country that has put her trust in me must give your answer, not my heart, for that seems dead (slowly). He must go with me.

Char. Ah!

[Winthrop, after his answer, has stood gazing off before him. Fair comes timidly forward, but he does not hear her. She softly lays her hand upon his arm. He looks down, sees her, and suddenly a radiant glow of happiness crosses his face, then vanishes, leaving it cold as before. Fair looks up into his face, then softly lays her other hand in his.

Fair. But---if---I love you, Steve?

Winth. (softly takes her in his arms, bending close over her). Even though you love me (Fair shrinks away from him. He turns to Hopkins: when he speaks his voice has a mechanical, hollow sound). Back to the camp; Mr. Hillary will accompany us.

Hillary. I am ready sir.

[He goes to the door with Hopkins. Charlotte, with a wild cry of "No, no!" rushes to him, throwing her arms around his neck. He softly kisses her, then hands her over to Mrs. S., who takes her in her arms. He then turns to Hopkins, making a sign of assent, and together they leave the room, followed by Winthrop.

Cupid (coming slowly forward, a haggard look on his face). Mistis (almost pleading) Mistis! Kin you forgib dis old fool nigger? I thought hit ud cheer you ter see um. Fo Gaud I never thought of Marster Carter coming here. Fo Gaud I never!

Mrs. S. We do not blame you. How could we have known. How could we?

Char. (raising her face). There's father yet and Gordon. They may come at any minute. We must save them. How, How; what can we do; what can we do?

[She crosses to the window, her hands pressed to her head.

Bev. Mother, if they come, it's sure to be across the orchard, then up the road through the wood. Cupid, you go and watch: and if you see a sign of any one, come tell us. Quick!

Mrs. S. If it's your Master, bring him here---in through the window of Bev's room. Keep away from the front of the house.

Cupid. Yes, Mistis. Dis ole fool nigger can do dat.

[Exit.

Mrs. S. (comes gently to Fair who stands looking down with a drawn look of suffering). Fair, my baby child, would it not have been better---could it have been easier---had you told me.

Fair. (coming to her arms). I meant to tell you mother---but, oh! I was afraid. The old days seemed so far away, and I so weak and foolish! And then he went into the army and came down here in arms against his people! The night you went to George, he asked me, and---I told a lie! I said I did not love him. But to-night, with the wild chance of saving Carter (she looks up into her mother's face and smiles), I told the truth!

Mrs. S. (softly kissing her). And it was best. My heart's own child! Your only happiness was there.

Char. (who has stood by the window listening). Best! What do we know about things that are best? And love and truth---what do we know of these? Are they not torn from us, trampled down, ground beneath our feet? And happiness---is it for us? Ah! no, no. For, are not our hearts crushed down in the cold black earth that covers those we love? What is there in this life for us? We are grown old before our time. Ah! in God's name, don't speak of love or happiness when it is such a mockery to us and those we love!

[She sinks limply down upon the sofa, burying her face in her hands.

[Mrs. S. kneels by the sofa, taking one hand in hers.

Mrs. S. My child, even though we walk through the valley of the shadow, look to Him who has given us, and who in His wisdom has taken away. He has said, "O grave, where is thy victory!" Oh, dearest child, look up to Him! He will give us again to the ones we love!

Char. (raising her face to hers). And for His sake, I will.

[Enter Cupid, hurriedly.

Cupid. Mistis, dey's comin'! dey's comin'!---Marster and Mars Gordon.

Mrs. S. Where?

Cupid. Rite out dar, in de hall.

[Enter Col. S. and Gordon. They are pale and very tired looking; their clothes covered with dust.

Mrs. S. (quickly to Col. S.). Philip, are you safe!

Col. S. We've found the location of the enemy.

Gordon (quickly). Where is Carter? He came here.

Char. They took him! Carter's captured!

Col. S. What!

Mrs. S. He was captured here in this room; he was disguised.

Gordon. How was he taken?

Char. Old Cupid did not know---he brought Winthrop and Hopkins here. He was discovered. They carried him away.

Col. S. Great God! and he had papers! Did they find any?

Fair. No, we burned the paper, but he knows all the plans of Winthrop's army.

Col. S. What did he say? Ah, if we only could have met him in time!

Char. He told us very little, only the position of the camp. But he knows all the plans and orders off by heart. He stole the plans from Winthrop's tent. But they have taken him---a spy! I tell you, they have taken him.

Gordon. We must not stay here a moment. A party will come and search the place.

Fair. Where will they take him?

Gordon. Where? (thinking). That's it. Where will they take him. His release. He had no papers on him. He'll not be shot down as a spy. Columbus; the prison there (slowly). Morgan's got to have that news. Escape; what is there else. Colonel, I must have a word with you in private (he turns to the others). You'll leave us for a moment. Here, Bev, have the best horse saddled for Col. Stuart. Take him to the far end of the orchard, fasten him to the big sycamore tree. You know the place.

Bev. Yes.

Gordon. Go, quick! Send Cupid with the horse and come back here.

[Exit Bev.

Col. S. What is your plan?

Gordon. You'll see. Mrs. Stuart, you Charlotte and Fair keep watch, and if you see the enemy, come back to us.

Char. Here, mother, Fair; we must not lose a moment.

[They exit.

Col. S. Now, what your plan?

Gordon. Carter has the plans of Winthrop's army. These plans he must give Morgan.

Col. S. But he is taken. How boy; how can he get the plans to Morgan?

Gordon. Carter will be taken to Columbus; the prison is not a long trip from here. They'll send him with a guard on the first train. There's nothing else (he comes nearer, speaking very intently). The prison at Columbus; we must tunnel it!

Col. S. Ah, I see. But how; how will we get the word to him?

Gordon. Leave that to me. For God's sake let me have my way in this! I tell you there's not one other chance; we've got to put this through. You have been to the prison there. Now, under the long room where all the boys are kept, there is a big drain pipe; it's opening is two hundred yards down the river (slowly measuring his words). Ten days from now---that will be the 22nd---employ a man to crawl up the pipe until he is exactly underneath the prison; this at midnight of the 22nd. Tell him to dig straight up until he strikes the brick work of the floor. Then Carter will have word and he will tunnel out to meet him.

Col. S. But how can he get word? Don't you see that unless some one is there to tell him, the plan will never work.

Gordon. I tell you he shall know. I cannot tell you now, but he shall know. Do not question me, but if ever you or General Morgan trusted me, put me to the test and trust me now. Get them to hide you---anywhere---the garden's best---where you can see this window. They'll search the house first, and when you hear a signal (a pause) the breaking of that window, go to your horse and ride for your life and mine.

Col. S. But you, boy; what will you---

Gordon. Oh, trust me, sir; I tell you trust me. I shall be all right. Go on before it is too late and let them hide you.

[Enter Bev.

Bev. The horse is there. You know the tree, father; you can find it.

Col. S. I'll take you at your word (he clasps his hand). At midnight of the 22nd.

Gordon. Remember when you hear the breaking of the glass.

Col. S. Where's your mother?

Bev. They're waiting in the dining room.

[Exit Col. S.

Gordon (intently). Can I trust you with the life of Morgan's army?

Bev. Show me. I'd give my life for Morgan.

Gordon. Then do what I say. Run to George's room, get me out a suit of his clothes; lay them on the bed; leave the door open. Then go to Charlotte and tell her I must see her here at once. Keep your mother and Fair in the dining room.

[Exit Bev running.

(Sinks down at the table, his hands clutching at the wood, his face drawn and white, his eyes staring). Show me the way. God! Am I afraid. No, No! It is not that. For greater love has no man than this, that he---that he---what is the rest?

Ah, God! (rises quickly: sits at desk: writes; his face showing a terrible resolve.)

[As he finishes paper, enter Charlotte from the hall.

Char. Bev said you wanted me.

Gordon. Charlotte, we've got to save Morgan's army as sure as there's a God in heaven, and just as sure you've got to help me. Do exactly what I ask and keep your nerve, for if you flinch a moment, we are lost.

Char. How? Tell me. I am not afraid.

Gordon. And I believe you. The enemy are sure to come and search the house. When they come, you must get them all together here. Do not be surprised at anything you see. Take this paper. It's simply a decoy. The plans are false. Use it to get them in this room. If need be, say you have taken it from Carter.

Char. (white with terror). I will.

[Takes paper.

Gordon. Remember, you and I have got to save the army. Now, when the men are here, on some pretense or other, you must break that window. It is a signal for the colonel to escape. You understand. You will not fail?

Char. Decoy them with this paper, and when they are here, break that window. I can do it, and I will.

Gordon (taking her hands and looking straight in her eyes). The life of Morgan's army is in your two hands. You will not fail.

[Exit hurriedly into the hall.

Char. God help me through this evening's work.

[Enter Bev, Mrs. S., Fair, Marthy and Cupid hurriedly.

Bev. They're coming, a whole squad of soldiers, up the avenue. I can hear them!

Char. The avenue, you say?

Bev. Yes, they're nearly here.

Char. You stay in here. You must obey me. Stay, and let me keep them. (Exit into hall. The voices of many soldiers are heard, the noise of their boots on the porch. (Without)---So you have come to search the place?

[A wild sort of irony in her tone.

Winth. With your permission.

Char. (at the door). Oh, certainly. Come in, come in. Perhaps you think you'll find other of your friends?

Winth. Madam, my quickest way is to make the best of a bad business, for you must see my duty in this matter. My men, with your permission, must search your house and then your grounds.

Mrs. S. I have told you, sir, that no one can deny the right of conquest.

[Winthrop, white and silent, turns to the men.

Winth. Hopkins, will you conduct the search, as quickly and as quietly as possible?

Hop. As you say.

[He and the soldiers start to the door, but are stopped by a cry from Charlotte, who stands between curtains at door center.

Char. Wait there! Your search shall not be long. See, I have all you wish. I have the paper here! (She tears it from the front of her dress). See, all the plans! Your visit shall not be in vain. And if you want a prisoner, and if you are not satisfied, why then take me. Ha! I am not afraid of you! Come, take me as your spy; I'll do you men no harm. Here, take the paper; it's all you need. I have the information, but I'll give it back to you. (She tears the paper in pieces, flinging it at them). There, fit the pieces for yourselves!

[The men all gather around the table, placing the paper before them.

Hop. It's only torn twice. Spread that piece out. What's here?

[They all bend over the paper. There is a movement in the hall. All the men look up, facing the door.

Hop. Who's there?

Gordon (draws back the curtains, entering from the hall in citizen's clothes). Your prisoner, sir!

[All the men start, then some go quickly to him. Mrs. S. gives a cry of "Gordon!" Then she and Fair stand gazing in a horrified way at him. Charlotte takes a step nearer.

Char. (under her breath). My God!

Hop. (to Gordon). I arrest you as a spy!

Gordon. I am already your prisoner.

Winth. (in an agony). Why did you not escape!

Gordon. I had no chance.

Winth. Ah!

Evans (by the table with the paper). Colonel, look at this paper. As I'm alive, I think it is a trick! The ink is hardly dry. What if she meant it for a signal?

Char. A signal! So that's it, you dog! You think I led him into his surrender; you think it is because I am afraid, and that is why I gave the paper up to you! A signal, then! If that is so, then every thing I do must seem a signal. I go up to him so (she goes to Gordon); I take his hands and look into his eyes; I say to him: Well done; you are a hero, even though you fail, I throw the curtains back and tell you, you can search the place: there's no more you can find; he is the last. And if I take this bowl and crash it at your feet, as I do now, you think that, too, a signal; and with this candle in my hand (she snatches up candlestick), instead of lighting you throughout the house, I rush up to the window here and crash it through the glass, as I do now, and cry to you: Come on! Come on! You call them all my signals?

[She dashes out of the room and down the hall, as

The curtain falls.

ACT III.

The prison at Columbus. A large, bare room, built of gray stone. At the back and to the left a door with heavy iron bars leading to the whitewashed corridor, where a lantern is hanging. A smaller door on right leading to another room of the prison. High up in the wall (Left) is a window with iron bars across it. At the back are two straw mattresses, with old army blankets on them. To the right a pile of straw which has evidently served as a bed. On each side of the stage there is a rough wooden bench. It is 11 o'clock on the night of May 22nd. The moon shines brightly in at the window. The prison clock slowly strikes the hour as the curtain rises. A soldier dressed in a torn white shirt and trousers of Confederate gray, lies asleep on the straw. Two soldiers lie stretched on the floor at front of stage (Right), two others walking restlessly about, while another is reading by the stump of a candle stuck in a bottle.

First Soldier. Has he been in for the last time to-night?

[He lifts a bit of candle on the floor and puts it near them.

Second Soldier. I reckon not. I haven't heard the big door close outside.

First Soldier. I say, let's play a game of checkers. We can hide it if he comes.

Second Soldier. How'll we play---what with?

First Soldier. Just you watch here. (Takes a bit of chalk out of his pocket and marks off a checker board on the floor. How's that? He'll never see it.

Second Soldier. We'll use bits of straw for men. Here---

[He breaks bits of straw and they begin to play.

Third Soldier (reading). I say, what time is it?

First Soldier (playing). Just struck eleven. (To Second Soldier)---Here, I jump that man.

Third Soldier. Well, my light goes out. I've got to have some for to-morrow.

[He comes over and begins to watch the game.

Second Soldier. Here, crown that man.

First Soldier (laughing). With what?

Third Soldier. Say, boys, want a treat? I got a midnight supper here.

First Soldier. Midnight hell!

Third Soldier. Look here!

[Goes to straw (Right), takes out a crust of bread and a small parcel done up in paper.

Second Soldier. There, the game's mine!

First Soldier (looks up, laughing). Where's your midnight spread?

Third Soldier. Ever eat any rat? Best thing going.

First Soldier. Where'd you catch him?

Third Soldier. In my bed. Got him roasted, too. Here---

[Gives them pieces of rat and breaks the bread.

First Soldier (his mouth full). Bully! Wish I'd catch one. I'm such a good mouser, there ain't many left around here.

Second Soldier. Say, where's that young fellow, Hillary?

[Looks around.

Third Soldier. In the parlor, talking to company. This is his at home day.

[They all laugh.

First Soldier. He's pretty blue, I reckon. There's talk of hanging him for a spy. They didn't find no papers---only reason they sent him here.

Third Soldier. Who's the fellow came in last night?

First Soldier. Caybel, Cabell, or some such name. Had a close call, too. Don't know yet he's safe. He didn't let on, but I think he's a friend of Hillary. Both captured at the same place. Been trying to talk to him all day, but Old Hill watches pretty close when a new one comes in (Bill's voice outside, singing a snatch of a song). Watch out! Hide the scraps; here's Bill.

[They cover the remains of feast and checker board, and the sound of a key is heard in the door. Enter Bill, the turnkey. He is a gruff old fellow of about sixty, powerfully built, with a cold, hard face. He carries an old fashioned lantern and a bunch of keys.

Bill (holding up lantern, looking about). Here, you all, get up from there: go to bed. What do you think this is---a pleasure resort? (the men rise to their feet, facing him with sullen faces). Go in thar, you hear (he pushes them roughly to the door (Right). Wars them others?

First Soldier. In there.

Bill. Who else?

First Soldier. Three others.

Bill (wakes up men sleeping, shaking them roughly; then goes to door (Right), holds up lantern, looking in). Go on ter sleep. Don't you set round here all night.

[He holds door open and the soldiers pass in. As the Third Soldier passes, he stops.

Third Soldier. I wonder if you'll get me a drink of water. The bucket's been dry since noon.

Bill. That's a lie! Always water there.

Third Soldier. You can see for yourself it's empty.

Bill. What do drink so damned much for, then?

Third Soldier. Will you get me the water, please?

Bill. No I aint going ter get yer no water. Go on ter sleep. What do you think I am, a nigger paid to wait on you?

Third Soldier. If I told you what I thought, you'd put the bracelets on me and throw me in the pit.

Bill. Well, watch you don't go there anyway.

Third Soldier. For God's sake!

Bill. Shut up!

[Exit into hall.

Third Soldier. Seven hours!

[Enter Carter. He is very pale and worn looking. He is without his coat; his clothes ragged and soiled.

Carter (looking up). What's the trouble?

Third Soldier. Nothing. No water, that's all.

Carter. I've got a little in a cup near the window. Take it.

Third Soldier (hesitates). Don't you want it?

Carter. No. But, say, will you do something for me?

Third Soldier. Won't I, though.

Carter. And keep quiet about it?

Third Soldier. Yes.

Carter. That fellow Cabell in there is a friend of mine. He's got something to tell me, but the warden watches you like a hawk. Send him in here and keep the others there.

[Exit soldier.

I can't make it out. He was captured alone. Uncle escaped. Then why not he? They were together. He's got to tell me, for I---

[Enter Gordon.

Shut the door!

Gordon (looking quickly around). We are alone. What time is it?

Carter. A little after eleven.

Gordon. There's time! There's time!

Carter. What do you mean?

Gordon (come nearer). We're going to escape.

Carter (breathless). Escape! How?

Gordon. I've tried all day to get a word with you but that warden watches too close. We're going to get out of this---You first. Remember, you have got the information.

Carter. All of it. But what's your plan?

Gordon. Before they brought me here I got word with your uncle and told him where we'd be. 'Twas a shot in the air, but it struck all right. I told them they would take us to the prison here at Columbus. Now underneath this floor there is a big drain pipe very near the brick work and on this night at twelve o'clock, a man sent here by Morgan was coming up the drain and tunnel up to us (here the prison clock strikes the half-hour). Ah! The bell! One. The half hour. Now if the man shall come we can be waiting. This is the room. Ah, if he should fail.

Carter. Can you save any of the others, shall we tell them?

Gordon. What time does the warden come on his last rounds?

Carter. Usually about twelve.

Gordon. Twelve. The very hour!

Carter. He may be late.

Gordon. We'll have to chance it.

Carter. How will we know when he comes up the drain?

Gordon. I told your uncle to have him dig until he came to the brick work, then we can tear up the floor and go down to him.

Carter. How is it you were captured and not Uncle Phil. I don't understand?

Gordon. Some carelessness of mine. But that don't matter. We're going to escape.

Carter. But it does matter. Tell me how it was. You said you got word to him at one time and then you said he did not know of your arrest. Now tell me straight, how were you captured.

Gordon (on his guard). Why I was scouting around for information---They took me---That was all---I went too near the camp---the moon was bright---The sentry saw me---I was not careful.

Carter (closer). You told me you were taken in my uncle's home.

Gordon. I ran there to escape. They followed me---they came in after me. I had no chance.

Carter. And in that time you got into George's clothes for a disguise. (slowly) I don't believe you.

Gordon. What do you mean?

Carter. I mean that I'm a fool. And that you are the best and bravest friend a man ever had in the world. At first I did believe you, though I did not understand. And now I see too clearly why you lied to me. (slowly) you gave yourself up

to the enemy so they would send you here with me. Your plan was made before---not afterwards. You gave your life into their hands to save me (he comes slowly forward) I am not worth it. Oh, I am not worth your life.

[He takes his hand.

Gordon. Pray God; its not in vain.

Carter. You did this thing for me and for the information to give Morgan?

Gordon (slowly). Yes.

Carter. And was there nothing else?

Gordon (slowly turning away). Perhaps.

Carter. Fair?

Gordon. Yes.

Carter. But---she does not---love---me.

Gordon (wearily). I know that.

Carter. Then, why? Oh, tell me, Gordon, for I do not understand. Tell me. A life is such a precious thing to give.

Gordon (who has turned away, speaking slowly). You---know---that I love her.

Carter. I was afraid of it.

Gordon. And still you do not understand?

Carter. No, I don't believe I do.

Gordon (with deep emotion). It is because I love her, and I know the man she loves.

[Carter draws suddenly back.

But it can never be. I think she knows it, poor little girl. And if it must be, she will then give up her love, as she has many things almost as dear to her. And now when you are free, I want you to go back home---to her. And when at last, if you shall win the dearest thing in life---oh, boy, be worthy of her love---be strong and true! Make up to her for all that she has suffered. God grant that you may teach her to forget.

[He turns away to the window.

Carter (coming behind him, speaking in a low, strained voice). But why all this for me? Are not your chances for escape as good as mine?

[Gordon does not move.

(Slowly Carter realizes the truth: he is deadly pale; then with a short intaking of the breath, he catches Gordon's arm).
You mean---

Gordon (turns, facing him). Yes.

Carter. To hide the place where I escape. No! You hear me---No!

Gordon. Quiet! For God's sake! (He comes close to Carter, placing both hands on his shoulders, looking him squarely in the eyes). You are going straight to Morgan, and you are going to save him and his army.

Carter. And you---

Gordon. I will come later.

Carter. How much?

Gordon. Two hours.

Carter. They'd find you out before then. But why, why not you take the news to Morgan?

Gordon. There is not time for me to even hear it: and if there were--. Ha! what's that?

[Far down underneath the floor the sound of metal striking on the rock.

You hear!

[The sound again.

Listen!

[The sound a little louder.

What part of the floor?

[The clock begins to strike twelve.

Carter. Under the mattress---here!

Gordon. Go to the door and listen for him.

[Carter goes to door and bends down, listening. Gordon pushes aside the mattress and begins to claw the bricks with his fingers.

Carter. All's quiet. He does not always come. Here, your hands are bleeding.

[He begins to help with the bricks. They get one up, then some dirt, then another brick.

Gordon. Only a second now (he and Carter tear up more bricks) Look out! (he pushes Carter back. A man's hand and arm appear through the floor, then is quickly withdrawn). All right!

Voice Below. Are you safe?

Gordon. Yes.

Voice. Horse outside. Come!

Carter. Gordon, you have---

Gordon. Not a word. Now's the time.

[As he is about to help Carter in the hole, the voice of Bill is heard outside.

Bill (without). All right, in a minute.

Gordon. You hear. Quick!

[He helps Carter down through the floor as the key is heard in the door. Gordon throws the bricks back into place, and then draws mattress over them. He snatches up blanket, drawing it partially over him, strikes out candle with his hand, pillows his head on his arm and pretends to be asleep. Enter Bill from the hall. He is very cross at having been disturbed.

Bill. Nice time o' night to be coming asking for prisoners. Fool! Why couldn't he wait till mornin (holds up lantern). Humph! Must all be sleepin in the parlor. Well, I'll get um out of thar (he catches sight of Gordon). Well, friendly fellow---this; wants room to himself. You, there; get up! (Gordon moves and half turns, but does not open eyes) Thunder! Are you dead? Get up!

[Shakes him roughly by the arm.

Gordon (half rising, as though very sleepy). What's the matter?

Bill. Matter? Get up from thar and you'll see.

Gordon. Well, I'm awake. What do you want?

Bill. Two fellers from the army ter see yer. Hump! That makes you look up, don't it? I guess they've got important business with you, you damned spy!

Gordon (rises quickly, confronting him). Be careful!

Bill (astonished, but drawing back). Careful, eh? We'll be careful enough of you. I don't guess your stay will be much longer here. That is the way we has with spies---damn you! (he opens the door). In here, sir.

[Enter Winthrop and Hopkins. They wear their hats and long riding capes and have evidently come a long way.

Hopkins. That's all, thank you. Wait outside and leave the lantern.

[Exit Bill.

Winthrop. In here?

Hop. Yes. This is the room.

[They come forward.

Gordon (rises to his feet). Good evening!

Winth. Cabell!

Hop. Good evening!

[Winthrop offers hand. Gordon looks at him for a second, then gives hand.

Winth. Our business is of the uttermost importance, sir. You must excuse the hour.

Gordon. That does not matter.

Hop. Hillary is in here with you, I understand. We have come to see you both.

Gordon. There are only a few of us in this part of the prison. We share the two rooms.

Winth. Our time is limited sir, we must see Mr. Hillary also.

Gordon. I'll find him, sir. (He goes to the door then turns) Could you not tell me, without him. He's been quite ill. He's only just asleep.

Winth. I'm sorry to hear this. How is he now?

Gordon (hesitates for a second). I think---He's very much better now.

Winth. But you will be enough. Now Cabell, first you must understand why we come here to-night. We came to try and save your life. You and Hillary have been captured in disguise, which means you both are spies, but we found no papers on you, and for that reason I could send you here. Now, Hopkins and I have thought and thought about your capture: but we cannot understand it, and that is why we come to you. You've played a part---a desperate game. You had some motive back of your surrender, but what we cannot guess. Now, man, I want to help you for your sake and for the sake of those back there. Go call out Hillary, and make a clean breast of it all. Tell me your game. Confess, and I will get

you both your liberty.

[Gordon stands looking at him for a second, then very slowly:

Gordon. I---I---don't understand what you ask. Surely, you have forgotten that you are speaking to an enlisted soldier of the South.

Winth. (quickly). I didn't mean that. See here---I only thought you'd fail, and then there was a chance to save the hearts of those you love, even as I love them.

Gordon. We'll not fail!

Winth. Where's Hillary? I must see him.

Gordon (going to the door). No, no; not that. I tell you, he is ill---asleep. Surely, I can answer you. Speak; say all you have to me. I'll answer you, but not to him.

[The bell strikes the half hour.

What's that---the bell again?

Winth. 12:30. Hopkins, we must see the man. (To Gordon)---I tell you, sir, we must.

[Enter Bill.

Bill. Are ye all right, sir?

Hop. Here, take the light and go in softly, and see if Mr. Hillary is awake.

Bill. What's wrong with him?

Hop. You ought to know; he's very ill.

Bill. Ill! He? Not a healthier man than him in here.

Hop. What!

Gordon (at the door). I tell you, don't disturb him.

Winth. It is essential. (To Bill)---Call Mr. Hillary.

[Exit Bill: pushes past Gordon with lantern. He is heard shouting, "Here, git up! Whar's Hillary? You thar! Get up!" A confused sound of voices: then Bill says loudly, "Here, whar is he? None of your damned jokes!" The voices grow louder.

[Enter Bill, hurriedly.

Bill (excited). He's not in thar! Look 'round the room. Ain't he in here!

[Goes hurriedly to the straw, then to mattress, then dashes into the other room.

Hop. Escaped! Impossible! Why not you?

[Re-enter Bill, runs to door on left, then into hall, crying, "Escaped prisoner! Guard!" The prison bell begins to ring.

[Enter Bill, followed by four men with rifles, carrying lanterns.

Bill (rushes to Gordon in a rage). Whar's that fellow gone? Tell me, or I'll---

[Starts to strike him.

Winth. You'll be kicked out of this prison---(To guards) Search the rooms. He may be hiding (to Gordon). For God's sake man, where has he gone?

[Gordon has come to the mattress, where he half kneels, watching the others.

Gordon (in a low voice). No.

[Re-enter the guard, followed by the rest of the prisoners, much excited. They talk in low voices to one another.

Hop. (coming forward with the lantern). Hello! What's this? Fresh earth on the floor. Here, men. Quick!

[They snatch away the mattress, disclosing the round hole in the floor.

Winth. He's gone.

Hop. (bending down). Where does this lead?

Winth. The drain pipe underneath the prison. Here, men, to the entrance on the river bank. Two of you wait to watch in here.

[Exit two of the guard and Bill.

Hop. What do you think it means?

Winth. That their plan has been successful.

Hop. (in an agony). Hillary had important news, but what---what can he have found out?

Winth. (turns to Gordon, almost pleading). Have you nothing for us to hear?

Gordon. Nothing.

Winth. Tell me, man. Ah, tell me why. You came into this of your own free choice, I can see that. You came that you might save him. That was not all. He had information. Then, that was it. Well, sir, the fight is on. You've won so far.

[A sudden radiant look of joy comes over Gordon's face.

Gordon. I pray God you are not mistaken.

[Re-enter Bill and the guards.

Bill. He's gone, whether by boat or horse we can't tell. We have a guard stationed at the river.

Winth. Very good. You may wait outside.

[Exit the two men.

Send the men back to the room.

Bill. Git back to bed, all of ye!

[The men go back to room (Right). As they pass Gordon, the soldier Carter gave the water to stops quickly, catching his hand.

Third Soldier. I wish you could have gone too.

[Gordon presses his hand, then the soldier exits with the others.

Bill. What else, sir?

Hop. Nothing; you can go.

[Exit Bill.

Winth. (comes slowly up to Gordon). Tomorrow. Have you thought about tomorrow?

Gordon (raising his head). Yes.

Winth. And the women who love you---Little Fair and Charlotte?

Gordon. They too!

Winth. (breaks out). Is there no hope for you: you will not speak? Ah, in God's name, think what you do!

Gordon. I have thought, sir.

Winth. (speaking low and very intently). Tell the news that Carter carried; tell me the way that he has gone, and why; tell me things he has found out---and, man, your part shall go unheeded and he released, if captured before he gives that news: tell me. Ah, God! man, tell me, and tomorrow, instead of giving up your life, you shall go free. You understand? You shall go free.

[For just a second Gordon hesitates. Winthrop starts forward with a glad cry of "Yes." Then Gordon looks away off towards the moon-lit window; his face is strangely bright; he is almost smiling; he turns to Winthrop.

Gordon. If I had a thousand lives, I'd give each one of them in turn for the Confederacy!

[As Gordon finishes speaking, the clock outside strikes one.

Winth. (starts as the clock strikes). You hear? Five hours more: Then you must die! You hear it---you must die! No power on earth can save you but yourself. Speak---for God's sake, speak! and let me take you home to them a free man---

Gordon. And a coward?

Winth. No, not that. The chances on your side are even. You have done all you could. Think of the old days when we lived down there, and how we hunted and fished and played together. Think of the love that's there for you. Think what your death would mean to them. Ah, speak out! Think of their grief!

Gordon. Grief does not kill. They will not die. If they were here, they'd say to me, each one of them: Be strong!

[Winthrop starts, then turns quickly away into the darkness outside the square of moonlight, covering his face with his hands. When he turns, his face is drawn and white.

Winth. (takes his hand, pressing it). I can take them no better word than this: you died as you have lived.

[He turns to the door where Hopkins has awaited him. Quickly they go out into the hall. Bill's voice is heard without.

Bill. You through for the night!

[He closes the door and locks it. At the sound of the key Gordon sinks to his knees in the square of moonlight.

Gordon. Thank God! (He remains with head bowed for a second, then looks about him). Five hours more!

[The heavy door of the prison is heard to close.

Gone! (He rises quickly to his feet). They have gone---and in the morning I have got to die! To-morrow! And on the scaffold, as a thief! To-night I have begun---to-morrow, then, sees how I end! Here, here, I must not think of that. No, no; I will not. That is not for me. Five hours more! The time is very short. Show me, dear God, how I shall spend it well and like a man! For is not Morgan saved! Has not the news gone safely out to him! And who has done all this!

Thank God! thank God! he gave that place to me! What matter if I am afraid, for now 'tis done---'tis done! I've saved the greatest man that ever lived. I've saved him---saved him! I---yes, I! What does it matter that I want to live---I want to live!

[He sinks down upon the mattress, covering his face with his arms, as

The curtain falls.

ACT IV.

The banks of the Aspen River, six months later. A cold, cloud-hung afternoon in late November. At the back the river may be seen through the trees, now almost stripped of their summer foliage. On both sides of the scene are heavy forest trees, mostly pine and cedar. Across the stage there winds a narrow and very rough road. It is the scene of Winthrop's camp, six months before. On the left a large fir tree, with branches low to the ground; on the right, some scrub pine and oak. Some traces of the camp are still to be seen; some broken boxes; the charred remains of a fire at the right, near front. The sound of the wind in the pines at rise. Enter Corporal Evans and Hopkins (Right) by the road. They have on their leggings and heavy army overcoats, with the collars up.

Evans (shivering). Uh! nasty weather. I have always been told about the sunny South. Good example of it, this!

Hopkins. It won't last long, I fancy. The last time I was here the fall was beautiful; never saw such splendid weather (he looks around). The old camp again. How much can happen in six months. Remember the fight here? I hate to think about it. We did well to get off with our lives.

Evans. Most of them didn't. I remember that night just like it was yesterday; 'twas the very night you got back from Columbus. The moon had just set behind them hills, and the sentry reported all quiet. I was just turning in, when down on us like a whirlwind came that rebel, Morgan. We didn't have a show; 'twas "boots and saddles" quicker than I ever saw it before.

Hop. Their victory all right; more than half our men were killed or captured, and all through the information that fellow Hillary brought through when he escaped from prison (he gazes off across the river). I wonder what's become of them---the people over there?

Evans. Why, ain't you heard a word from them?

Hop. No, not since we were here in May. Things look right different now. Why, all along the way, as we were marching here, I couldn't help thinking how it was changed; the fences down, the fields all gone to waste, most of the houses burned, and only here and there some crazy negro cabin, looking as though it were about to tumble down. How those poor devils live I don't quite see. Ten or twelve of them in just one little room; and then to see them run and hide when we pass by, you'd never think we came down here to free them.

Evans. How's Col. Winthrop today? He hasn't seemed the same since this here fight six months ago. He used to be the life of all the camp, and now he hardly ever speaks. Seems like he has grieved most to death. I wonder why? Losing a few men don't often hurt a soldier so.

Hop. (again looking off across the river). Perhaps it isn't that.

Evans. I wonder why---(he stops, as the sound of voices is heard among the trees (Left). Hello! What's that?

[Off (Left) a child is heard.

The Child. Come on, come on; it's recess!

Hop. Who is it?

Evans. Them children from the school, I guess. It's just a little way up the road, I've heard; we'd better duck!

Hop. Yes; back in the trees. No one must see us (he looks off (Left). Hello! Who's that with them?

Evans. The school ma'm, I guess. Come.

Hop. (looking intently off). You go; I'll come in a second.

[Exit Evans.

Miss Charlotte! Have they come to this? She teaching school!

[He exits (Right) among the trees.

A Little Girl's Voice (nearer). Come on, come on; we're going to the camp.

[Enter by the road (Left) a little group of children; they are very small, between the ages of six and ten, all dressed in poor, home-made garments; some of the girls have shawls over their heads. They seem happy. Nearly all carry little parcels wrapped in paper.

A Boy. Ain't you glad it's recess, and we can eat our lunch down here?

A Girl. Corse we are. We can't stay long, though---it's so cold.

A Boy. Ain't you got any mittens, Susie?

Girl. No, but I'm not cold---not much.

The Boy. Here, you take these. I don't need um---truly.

The Girl. Oh, oh---thank you, Jim. (She puts them on). Oh, me, but they are nice and warm.

[Enter slowly by the road (Left) Charlotte. She is very pale and tired looking. She wears a black dress and black scarf over her hair. She leads a tiny little girl who carries her package of lunch.

Char. We can't stay long, remember, children. It is very cold.

[The children go to the boxes (Right) and begin to open the lunch.

A Boy. We're eatin' same as soldiers.

[A little boy and girl, the poorest dressed of the children, stand a little apart from the rest watching them. Their little faces are pinched and thin; they seem very sad. The little girl by Charlotte begins to open her lunch with much importance, spreading the paper on Charlotte's lap, who sits on a stump (Left).

The Baby Girl. Oh, look! Miss Charlotte. I've dot a torn pone wid 'lasses on it.

Char. (affecting great interest). My, what a fine lunch you have, baby!

The Child (holding half up to her). You dot to have some, too.

Char. (stroking her hair). No, precious; you must eat your nice lunch. You know Aunt Marthy is going to bring Miss Charlotte hers.

The Baby. Teacher ain't dot no good lunch. Please, eat some of mine.

[Charlotte breaks off a tiny piece of bread and begins to nibble it, affecting great enjoyment. The child begins to eat her own lunch happily.

A Girl by Box (speaking to another nearer). Johnnie and Sue ain't got no dinner.

A Boy. They's too poor, I speck.

The Girl. Don't you say that. Their papa's killed.

[She goes to the boy and girl, offering half her dinner; the others follow, offering theirs. The two children begin to smile, and reach eagerly for the lunch and eat as though very hungry.

A Girl. Come on, let's have a party.

[They all gather round the box, laying the lunch out on it. They have little, mostly corn pone and bacon.

The Baby Girl (who has watched them eagerly). Me do have party, too. (She comes to the box, laying her half-eaten corn pone with the rest). I dot 'lasses on mine.

[Charlotte sits watching them. She smiles as the little child joins them.

A Girl. We must ask the blessin'. Mamma says we must.

The Baby. Me say blessin'. Me knows how.

[All the children bow their heads around the box. The baby stands with eyes tight closed.

Dood Lord, we thank Thee. A---amen.

[The children raise their heads and begin to eat very fast.

A Boy. My, it's good!

Char. (coming over to where they are). Aren't you getting cold?

A Boy. No, no; not a bit; and besides, we want to skip stones.

The Baby. Me skip stones, too.

[At the suggestion, they all jump up from the box, still eating, and run to the back of scene.

A Boy. Bet I can throw across the river.

Another Boy. Bet you can't.

[They both try.

The Boy. I did. See where it hit!

The Younger Boy. Well, I most did.

Baby Girl (tries to throw). Me throw.

Char. Come, children, we must go back now.

Boy. Just a little minute more.

[They throw again.

A Girl. Come on, teacher's tired; we must go back.

[They start off (Left).

Baby Girl. Me tired, too. (Runs to Charlotte; holds up arms). Please?

Char. (lifts her). And when we get back, teacher will tell a story.

A Boy. Come on, come on; it's going to be a story.

[They all start off, followed by Charlotte carrying the little girl. As she is nearly off, enter Winthrop (Right). He is very changed and seems much older than before. His step is less alert, as he walks slowly, his arms folded on his breast. He looks up, sees Charlotte, and starts as though to withdraw.

The Baby. Dare's a pine cone---wants it.

[Charlotte puts her down; she gets cone; then Charlotte lifts her again, and slowly exit (Left).

Winth. (gazing longingly after her). And they have come to that---she teaching for her living! God! when will this end? And the others---are they, too, working---Mrs. Stuart and Fair? Have they come to this! If I could only see the old place. I wonder if it has gone to ruin as all the rest has gone. (He gazes longingly across the river, as Hopkins has done). Hello! what's that? A boat! and crossing the stream. By George, it's old Aunt Marthy; she's rowing the boat herself. I wonder where she's going. Poor soul! She's coming after Charlotte, I suppose. She's landing; she can hardly climb the bank. I wonder who runs the ferry now, and the old mill, where Fair and I used to ride together and sit and watch the water on the wheel.

[His face has a white, set look.

Aunt Marthy (off Right). Ef I kin get up dis here bank. I ain't fit ter be climbin' 'round dis way. Dar, I's up, I reckon.

Winth. Coming this way. I'll speak to her. She'll tell me how they are.

[Enter Marthy (Right). She carries a small, covered basket. She is looking down, picking her way over the rough ground, and does not see Winthrop.

Winth. Aunt Marthy.

Marthy (looks up, sees him, starts, looks again). Fo' Gaud! ef hit ain't Mars Winthrop.

Winth. I'm mighty glad to see you, Marthy. What are you doing 'way out here?

Marthy. Well, sir, I sho is sprised ter see you. I don come 'cross de river to fotch Miss Charlotte her dinner.

Winth. Where is she?

Marthy. She up dar at de school house. Ain't you don hear 'bout dat? She's teachin' school.

Winth. I haven't heard anything about them for a long time now. I haven't been here since the fight last May.

Marthy. I come hyer most every day to fotch de lunch for her. She bin teachin' since September. I couldn't git nobody to row de ferry, so I had ter get in de skiff and row dat way. Cos I blegged ter get hyer some way.

Winth. How are they all now, Marthy? I hope they are all well. I have tried so hard to get some word of them, but no one seemed to know. How are they?

Marthy. Well, sir, dey ant so well as what de might be. Pears like hits hard ter say just how dey is, de trouble done change um so. I reckon, do, deys well, and cose, sir, dey ant give up; nor, sir, ant ney one ob um done dat. You heard bout Mars George bein kill way down dar bout two miles other side of the place. Yes, sir, dats when you was hyr las time. Pears like hit come on us so fast I sorter disremember. Well, dey brought him home--Old Mistus and Miss Charlotte did--but, sir, hit change um mighty. Deys jus as brave and fine as dey ever bin, but cose, sir, hit change um. Den dar was de time Mars Carter he was captured and Mars Gorden go arter him and turn him loose, but he ant save hisself. You know bout dat, do, I reckon. Dey--(she pauses, then continues with an effort). Dey hung him, sir, next mornin fo de suns up good. Cose dey offer him he freedom, but dat ant mek no difference ter him. He done save de army, and dat what he kyr bout. Well, sir, dey brung him home and me and Miss Charlotte and Miss Fair and Mars Bev we bury him wid our own hands. De soldiers say dey dig de grave, but Mistus she say no, she reckon we can do hit; so Cupid dig de grave down in de gyrden and we bury him dar next day, close by Mars Phil and Mars George (she pauses and draws her hand across her eyes). Well, sir, hit did seem dat ought ter be de end ob de trouble, but de very next Sunday mornin we see de ambulance wagen turn in at de gate, and hit was Mars Carter and Old Marster, both on um, sir, both on um! Mars Carter was done shot dead and Old Marster done had he leg shot off up near his body (she pauses again). Peared like Old Mistus knowed dey was comin. She done dress up in her black silk dress and standin out dar in de front porch waitin. When dey come up to de do, she jus look down at um fer a minute, den she say rite lo, "In hyr, please," and she turn and led the way back to her room. She sot dar all night long wid Old Marster's head on her brest, talkin to him, rite easy, bout how proud she was ob her soldiers and how glad she was dat dey come home: but, sir, hit warnt no use, he died long bout mornin, cause dey warnt no doctor we could get fer him. We buried um long side ob de others out dar in de gyrden; and dar dey is--five on um, sir, and we ant got nobody lef us cep little Mars Bev. Yes, sir, he dar yet, praise Gaud!

[Winthrop has been listening eagerly, but towards the latter part he turns away, looking off across the river. When he turns he is strangely pale and worn looking. He speaks with an effort.

Winth. And Fair, how is she now?

Marthy. Well, sir, dat child done keep Old Mistus live, I recon. She and Mars Bev dey took de old place rite in dey own hands and run hit, sir. Dey do mos everything whats did roun dar now. Cose Cupid he helps a little, but den he cripple wid de rumatiz and cose he can't do much. Dem chullen gets us mos all what we has ter eat. Dey raise er little crap ob corn and work hit demselves. Dey got ol Jack yet. Dey done gib de other hoses to de army, since Old Mistus say she recon she ant need um no mo. Yes, sir, deys de bestis chullen. But Mars Bev still talk bout goin in de army. He say he blegged ter go, cause he par say de las thing fo he died dat he want hit (she is speaking slowly, almost to herself). Miss Fair done got de uniform ready. I reckon hit wont be long now; yes, sir, I reckon it wont be long.

Winth. (suddenly). Marthy, I want you to do something for me. Will you?

Marthy. Yes, marster.

Winth. (gives her a roll of greenbacks). I want you to take this and see that they want for nothing (she hesitates). I am their kinsman, and I have a right to give this for their support. Here, take it.

[He presses the money into her hands.

Marthy. I thanks you sir; I sho does. Hit'll do me a power er good ter git um somethin' they kin eat. I reckon I better say nothin' 'bout hit, though. Dey's Stuarts yet, sir, even do de war done brek um.

Winth. Of course. And here---I'll send you more when this is gone. Where can I send it?

Marthy. De post office at de junction don bin burn down. But ef you leave hit wid any one of um over dar, I'll git hit.

Winth. Yes. And is there anything else---anything on God's earth I can do for them?

Marthy (slowly). No, sir. And I thanks you fer doin' so much. But I rekon dey ain't nothin' none of us kin do.

[She slowly exits up the road (Left).

Winth. (looking after her). I guess she's right. There's nothing we can do.

[Enter Hopkins.

Hop. The men are coming on to camp here in the old place; the ground is too bad down there.

Winth. Yes, yes; of course.

[Enter Evans and a party of some ten or twelve soldiers. Two of them begin to light a fire on the old place covered with ashes.

Evans. We found good shelter for the horses underneath the pines.

[The men begin to spread the blankets and another to make coffee.

Winth. Have you a picket out?

Evans. Yes, down on the river bank. Shall we stop here to-night?

[It begins to snow very gently.

Snow! I'm glad we got into camp before night.

Hop. (rubs hands and looks towards the fire). And we'll have coffee soon. This reconnoitering ain't much to my taste.

[He turns to Winthrop. A noise (off Right).

[Enter soldier quickly.]

Soldier. The enemy!

Winth. Where?

Soldier. There, across the river. Hark!

[The distant sound of horses galloping is heard.]

Winth. Under cover! Load! Make ready!

[They all crouch behind bushes with guns in readiness. The horses' hoofs are plainly heard, and then the sound of voices singing "Spur On." The sound comes nearer, then the hoofs cease.]

Winth. They're in the river. Ready! Aim! Fire!

[A volley of shots.]

Hop. They're stopped---some down. Charge! Capture!

[Exit soldiers.]

Evans. Watch the kid in baby blue.

[He rises higher than the others and fires. There's a feeble return of the fire (off Right).]

Winth. (springs to his feet). God! No! Bev!

Hop. Down, man!

[Winthrop staggers; is about to fall; Hopkins catches him; eases him to the ground.]

Where?

Winth. Here in the side.

[Hopkins presses his handkerchief to wound.]

It was little Bev.

Hop. No; you are wounded.

Winth. I'm all right. See to the boy.

[Re-enter soldiers with four Confederate soldiers wounded.
They place them on the blankets.

Hop. Come; look for the little boy who had the flag.

[He exits with two men.

A Wounded Soldier. Was little Stuart---killed?

Winth. (raising himself with an effort). I do not know.

The Soldier (barely able to speak). He joined us not a half hour ago---first venture in army---last one of boys---had the flag.

Winth. Are they coming?

Soldier (raising himself, painfully). Yes. Good God!

[He quickly hides his face on his arm.

[Enter Hopkins, bearing Bev's body in his arms. Bev wears the little blue uniform Fair made in Act I. There is a great blood stain over his heart. He is strangely young and childish looking---a faint smile on his lips. One of the soldiers is carrying a Confederate battle-flag, torn from its staff, very ragged and muddy.

Winth. (trying to rise). Dead!

Hop. Dead! (Looks down at Bev). Where?

Winth. Over there---on my coat. (Points to where his overcoat is lying under one of the trees, back to the right). Put the flag near him.

[The soldier does so, after they lay Bev's body gently down.
Hopkins comes to Winthrop, lifts head, giving him water from a tin cup.

Winth. Give some to them.

[Indicates prisoners.

Soldier (in a broken, gasping voice). I reckon some one---told her by this time---few of them got away---passed by home. I'd rather be here, though---than to be the one to tell her. She'll come for him, I reckon.

[Hopkins begins to pace up and down at the back, looking anxiously off across the river.

Winth. She---will come---here.

Soldier. Young Stuart---never fought before---plucky young 'un, too. Would ride in front with flag---no keepin' him back. Might have saved him---bad.

Hop. (stops, gazing off across stream through the falling snow). She's coming.

Winth. The boat!

Hop. Yes.

Winth. Alone?

Hop. No, an old negro is with her; she has a white flag up. They are very near.

[The snow begins to fall more heavily. At the back an old boat comes slowly into view through the trees. Fair, dressed in her little black dress, stands in the bow, with a handkerchief tied on a long wooden staff. She is without her hat, her hair blowing about her face, her eyes straining through the thickly falling snow; she is deadly pale; she stands erect and very still. Old Cupid, also without his hat, is at the other end of the boat rowing. They move across stage from (Right) to (Left), disappearing (Left).

Hop. They are at the landing.

[All the men stand looking after the boat until it has disappeared.

Winth. Where are they now!

Hop. Coming up the bank.

[All the soldiers are looking off (Left). Enter Fair, holding the white flag on the staff, followed by Cupid.

Fair (stopping a short distance away). I have come to claim my dead!

[At the sound of her voice every man takes off his hat. They stand: some looking at her, some looking away.

Hop. (coming forward). He is here (she looks at him for a second as though in recognition, then her face is cold as before, her eyes shining). God!

[He turns away. She looks past him; sees Bev's body on the coat; goes quickly to him, dropping to his side, her arms around him.

Winth. (to Hopkins). Where---has she gone? It seems so dark.

Hop. I saw her swoop down like a mother bird to her young. (Winthrop tries to speak; his voice fails; he sinks limply back on the blanket). Steve! Only fainted. Ah! (he rises and goes slowly to Fair; when he speaks, his voice is very soft). Won't you speak to him. He may be dying?

[Fair has risen to her feet. She comes slowly forward. She sees Winthrop, and for a second a wild flash of joy crosses her face. She starts forward, but stops herself suddenly, her hands before her eyes. She stands for a moment, very white and quiet; when she speaks, her voice is low and very tired.

Fair. Better so! Better so!

[She turns once more to the body. Two soldiers come forward at a sign from Hopkins, but old Cupid steps before them.

Cupid. I ax yer pardon, sir, but dis hers my place. Ole Mistus done told me ter tek ker on him.

[He goes to the body and lays the flag over his arms, lifting Bev as though he were a child; his arms under him, his head against his breast. He starts slowly off (Left), followed by Fair, who walks as one in a dream. [They exit (Left).

It begins to snow more heavily. The men stand watching them. Slowly the old boat comes into view. This time Cupid is in the bow, trying to shield his burden from the storm. Fair stands at the other end, rowing. The snow grows thicker and thicker 'till, as the boat is nearly off, it is blotted from the sight. The soldiers stand with heads uncovered in the driving storm as

The curtain creeps slowly down.