

"Ah! he is dead! You have killed him!"

"Should he not die, lady, his base proposals to you were his death warrant. But aside from that, I have known him long, and he deserved to die. Had I taken him a prisoner, he should have hanged; as it is, he is honored by having died by my pistol."

"He should die," she replied, with indignation. "He has been most base, vile, and ungrateful. But who are you, who have thus rescued me?"

"First answer me," he said, "whether he was and is your sole attendant, and how you came in this lonely spot."

Marie briefly informed him what the reader is already acquainted with, in reference to her mission and its object.

"You are too late," said he, "Fort Jumonville is deserted. On the approach of our troops, the garrison fled. I can tell you nothing of its commander, your father; our information having been derived from scouts. But the garrison must have had time to depart in perfect order, and you have a right to hope that your father still survives. If he has been taken prisoner by my troop, he is safe, for we sanction not barbarity, and you shall soon see him. For," continued he, with a smile, which was intended to reassure her, "you, as well as your traveling equipage, are prisoners of war."

"I am your prisoner?"

"Yes," he replied, "but only until I can regain my command shall you remain so. I need the services of your horses for that purpose, and here I give you a soldier's word, that the moment I overtake my friends, you, with your father, if he be a prisoner, shall be sent to Quebec."

"I believe you, sir," replied Marie, "for your face and voice bespeak you a man of honor. May I again ask who you are?"

"My name is Putnam."

"What!" she exclaimed, with a start, "are you the fierce——. Pardon me, I scarcely know what I say. Are you?"

"I am known as General Putnam. If they call me fierce——"

"Pardon me, sir," she reiterated, with down-cast eyes.

"If they call me fierce, they wrong me; and you, hereafter, shall be the champion of my good name. As you find me, speak of me; I engage my honor to you, that, in my charge you shall be as safe as one man's arm can make you—as safe as if you were my own daughter. A true soldier will ever protect a soldier's child. Will you, with confidence, yield yourself to me?"

"I will; I do," she replied.

"Then we must depart instantly. Your conveyance is most welcome. By it I shall be enabled to join my force to-morrow."

"You are wounded," said Marie: "have you been in an engagement?"

"Yes, and a severe one, with forces sent from Quebec."

"From Quebec? Who commanded them?" she hastily demanded.

"A brave man, and a true soldier. May God bless him!" and emotion shook the general's voice.

"His name?—his name?" she eagerly asked.

"Rouelle! I can never forget it."