

turned roots of a tree and the accumulations of years of growth and decay. White crept behind some bushes, watching and listening, for he was quite mystified, having neither seen nor heard anything to attract unusual attention. He had not to wait long, however, before he thought he could make out something like the quiet, cautious tramp of approaching footsteps; he felt quite excited by the novelty of his situation, not quite assured of his safety, and still not afraid, although he had no weapon more formidable than a strong, hunting clasp-knife.

He kept his eyes fixed upon Bent watching for some movement, for, to outward appearance, he might have been some sylvan statue, motionless and still as the trees around. Suddenly Bent stepped from his concealed position, and looking up at a bluff immediately above and opposite to them he quietly enquired,

"Say, friend, are you looking out for some one?"

The man he addressed was holding on to a young tree, as he leant forward over the edge of the bank, staring intently down the ravine. When Bent spoke, he started back, evidently very much surprised, but seeing that Bent had no rifle, and assumed a pacific manner, he became reassured and said,

"Yes, I am, which way have you come?"

"From Point Fort," said Bent, "there are two of us, and we are looking for a party of men from about Albany."

"We are the men," he answered, "go on, and you'll find us up above."

At the head of the ravine, resting after a hurried march, were between twenty and thirty men, evidently farmers and artisans: they were all well armed and appeared to be a very resolute, active body of men. The young man acting as scout had apprized them of their coming, for they were all watching their approach. The leader of the party, a tall, handsome man, of superior address, and carrying a rifle beautifully mounted in silver, stepped forward to greet them.

"Hallo, Bent, you here;" was his first exclamation.

"I'm here," said Bent, "And the women and children are in Point Fort, so far good. The next thing will be to get them quietly away without giving any alarm to the garrison."

"Where are the redskins gone to?" enquired the leader, whom we will now call Johnson.

"I understood they were going towards Oswego, but that might be a blind; they are after some *deviltry*, no fear, and if we could get some assistance, and intercept them on their return, we might give them a lesson they want badly. But now for my plan.

If we possibly can do it, we'll smuggle the women and children away from the fort before dark, if not as soon after as possible. Remain here until I come."

As Bent and White were turning to go, Gordon stepped forward and taking Bent by the hand said:-

"If you succeed in rescuing my wife and children I shall be your debtor for life, and although my home has been burnt and most of my property destroyed or carried off, I shall try to give you some token of my esteem, if I have to sell my farm to do it."