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*SHEA, OF THE IRISH BRIGADE*

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I could see the fellow outlined against the streak of sky, as he thrust a forked beard into the narrow opening. He was wrenching still at the obstinate shutter, and, taking swift advantage of the noise to conceal my own movements, I crept into the attic, and snuggled down under the straw. I could hear as plainly as in the room below, but the flooring, although warped and ill-laid, prevented my seeing anything. My heart beat rapidly, for I fully comprehended now the peril which would follow my discovery. The Austrians, or Hollanders, would have served me better than these brawling English. They would show small mercy to one wearing my uniform. And what could they be doing here? 'T was said in camp the Duke of Cumberland was to the north, yet here surely was a squadron of Guards, and very much at home.

I could distinguish the movements below, as the fellow dropped from the window, crossed the floor, striking against the table in the dark, and swearing vigorously, as he unbarred the door.