

sequence I also owe thanks; for when the brave sergeant who held me at bay sent a man to report the nature of the desperado he had besieged, the soldier had neglected to mention the list of my crimes, only asking for reënforcements to capture one, Marcy, and with typical British short-sightedness, the commander had sent back word that he considered six men as amply sufficient to capture one man, a woman and a nigger.

Up to sunset not a Redcoat had presented himself as a mark, nor had a shot been fired at the house since the harmless answer to my first. But I had no doubt that a force lay in the surrounding shrubbery, waiting for use, and to send Rance through their line to fire the house and then make a demonstration from the orchard seemed about the only thing to do. It was somewhere near nine o'clock and Rance was impatient to be off, while Dorothy was urging me to go with him and make good my escape, leaving her to the mercy of her captors to whom she would surrender, when suddenly on the quiet air came the rattle of distant musketry followed by quick, dropping shots, and in a minute or two, as I stood there with my love in my arms, I saw the eastern sky turn red with fire.

Even then I did not guess the truth; but when the