

on the word, her eyes petitioned him desperately. "Ah, de grace! tu n'as pas le droit——"

He understood. With a passing bitter laugh he turned from her entreaties and hurled the pistol across the battlements into air. A hand flung open the hatch. A British officer—Etherington, Major of the Forty-sixth—pushed his head and shoulders through the opening and stared across the leads, panting, with triumphant jolly face.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE FORT SURRENDERS

THE red-coats, who had forced their way up the tower by sheer weight of numbers and at the point of the bayonet, were now ordered to face about and clear the stairway; which they did, driving the mixed rabble of Canadians and Indians down before them, and collecting the dead and wounded as they went. Five of the Indians had been bayoneted or trampled to death in the struggle; two of the garrison would never fight again, and scarcely a man had escaped cuts or bruises.

But Diane, as she followed her father's body down the stairs, knew nothing of this. The dead and wounded had been removed. The narrow lancet windows let in a faint light, enough to reveal some ugly stains and splashes on the walls; but she walked with fixed unseeing eyes. Once only on the way down her foot slid on the edge of a slippery step, and she shivered.

In the sunlight outside the doorway a group of men, mauled and sullen, some wearing bandages, others with blood yet trickling down their faces, stood listening to an altercation between M. Etienne and a couple of spick-and-span British officers. As their Commandant's body came through the doorway they drew together with a growl. Love was in that sound, and sorrow, and helpless rage. One or two broke into sobs.