

in their terraced garden. Their supper was served there, in that loveliest of spots, with steps ascending from the graded walk below. They were full of hope and happiness, jesting and careless, when there was a step upon the gravel and the tread of a soldier ascending the stairs.

The husband and wife exchanged glances. Captain Pilkington had been through many of the chief battles of that campaign, serving at the head of his company or on the staff of the com-



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mander-in-chief. He had been at home but a few days on sick leave, and to await orders. He had turned his ankle when springing from a horse and was just able to walk again. The wife turned her head and regarded the orderly, who stood respectfully at the head of the steps, with a sense of coming trouble. Noting this her husband laughed.

"Duty is ever the marplot of a soldier's life, sweetest Mary," he said, bending over her chair an instant. "But would you