The Panther.

BY J. FENIMORE COOPER.

By this time they gained the summit of the mountain, where they left the highway, and pursued their course under the shade of the stately trees that crowned the eminence.

The day was warm, and the girls plunged more deeply into the forest, as they found its invigorating coolness agreeable contrasted to the excessive heat they had experienced in the ascent. The conversation, as if by mutual consent, was entirely changed to the little incidents and scenes of their walk, and every tall pine, and every shrub or flower, called forth some simple expression of admiration. In this manner they proceeded along the precipice, catching occasional glimpses of the Ostego, or pausing to listen to the rattle of wheels and the sounds of hammering that rose from the valley, to mingle the signs of men with the scenes of nature, when Elizabeth suddenly started and exclaimed—

Listen! there are the cries of a child on this mountain! Is there a clearing near us? or can some little one have strayed from its parents?"

"Such things frequently happen," returned Louisa. "Let us follow the sounds: it may be a wanderer starving on the hill."

Urged by this consideration, the females pursued the low, mournful sounds that proceeded from the forest, with quick and impatient steps.

More then once, the ardent Elizabeth was on the point of announcing that she saw the sufferer, when Louisa caught her by the arm, and pointing behind them, cried—

"Look at the dog!"

Brave had been their companion, from the time the voice of his young mistress lured him from his kennel, to the present moment. His advanced age had long before deprived him of his activity; and when his companions stopped to view the scenery, or add to their bouquets, the mastiff would lay his huge frame on the ground, and await their movements with his eyes closed, and a listlessness in his air that ill accorded with the air of a protector. But when, aroused by this cry from Louisa, Miss Temple turned, she saw the dog with his eyes keenly set on the ground, and his hair actually rising on his body, through fright or anger. It was most probably the latter, for he was growling in a low key, in a manner that would have terrified his mistress, had she not so well known his good qualities. "Brave!" she said "be quiet, Brave! what do you see fellow?" At the sound of her voice, the rage of the mastiff, instead of being at all diminished, was sensibly increased.

He stalked in front of the ladies, and seated himself at the feet of his mistress, growling louder than before, and occasionally giving vent to his ire, by a short, surly barking.

"What does he see?" said Elzabeth; "there must be some animal in sight."

Hearing no answer from her companion, Miss Temple turned her head, and beheld Louisa standing with her face whitened to the color of death, and her finger pointing upward with a sort of flickering, convulsed motion. The quick eye of Elizabeth glanced in the direction indicated by her friend, where she saw the fierce front and glaring eyes of a female panther, fixed on them in horrid malignity, and threatening to leap. "Let us fly," exclaimed Elizabeth, grasping the arm of Louisa, whose form yielded like melting snow.

There was not a single feeling in the temperament of Elizabeth Temple that could prompt her to desert a companion in such an extremity.

She fell on her knees, by the side of the inanimate Louisa, tearing from the person of her friend, with instinctive readiness, such parts of her dress as might obstruct her respiration, and encouraging their only safeguard, the dog, at the same time, by the sound of her voice.

"Courage, Brave!" she cried, her own tones beginning to tremble, "courage, courage, good Brave!"

A quarter grown cub, that had hitherto been unseen now appeared, dropping from the branches of a sapling that grew under the shade of the beech which held its dam.

This ignorant, but vicious creature, approached the dog, imitating the actions and sounds of its parent, but exhibiting a strange mixture of the playfulness of a kitten with the ferocity of its race.

Standing on its hind legs, it would rend the bark of a tree with its fore paws, and play the antics of a cat; and then, by lashing itself with its tail, growling, and scratching the earth, it would attempt the manifestations of anger that rendered its parent so terrific.

All this time Brave stood firm and undaunted, his short tail erect, his body drawn backward on its haunches, and his eyes following the movements of both dam and cub. At every gambol of the latter, it approached nigher to the dog, the growling of the three becoming more horrid at each movement, until the younger beast overleaping its intended bound, fell directly before the mastiff. There was a moment of fearful cries and struggles, but they ended almost as soon as commenced, by the cub appearing in the air, hurled from the jaws of Brave, with a violence that sent it against a tree so forcibly as to render it completely senseless.

Elizabeth witnessed the short struggle, and her blood was warming with the triumph of the dog, when she saw the form of the old panther in the air, springing twenty feet from the branch of the beach to the back of the mastiff. No words can describe the fury of the conflict that followed. It was a confused struggle on the dry leaves, accompanied by loud and terrific cries. Miss Temple continued on her knees, bending over the form of Louisa, her eyes fixed on the animals, with an interest so horrid, and yet so intense, that she almost forgot her own stake in the result.

So rapid and vigorous were the bounds of the inhabitant of the forest, that its active frame seemed constantly in the air, while the dog nobly faced his foe at each successive leap. When the panther lighted on the shoulders of the mastiff, which was its constant aim, old Brave though torn with her claws, and stained with his own blood, that already flowed from a dozen wounds, would shake off his furious foe like a feather, and rearing on his hind legs, rush to the fray again, with jaws distended, and a dauntless eye. But age, and his pampered life, greatly disqualfied the noble mastiff for such a struggle. In everything but courage, he was only the vestige of what he had been.

A higher bound than ever, raised the wary and furious beast far beyond the reach of the dog, who was making a desperate but fruitless dash at her, from which she alighted in a favorable position on the back of her aged foe. For a single moment only could the panther remain there, the great strength of the dog returning with a convulsive effort. But Elizabeth saw, as Brave fastened his teeth in the side of his enemy, that the collar of brass around his neck, which had been glittering throughout the fray, was the color of blood, and directly, that his frame was sinking to the earth, where it soon lay prostrate and helpless.

Several mighty efforts of the wildcat to extricate herself from the jaws of the dog followed, but they were fruitless, until the mastiff turned on his back, his lips collapsed, and his teeth loosened, when the short convulsions and stillness that ensued, announced the death of poor Brave.

Elizabeth now lay wholly at the mercy of the beast. There is said to be something in the image of the Maker that daunts the hearts of the inferior beings of his creation; and it would seem that some such power, in the present instance, suspended the threatened blow. The eyes of the monster and the kneeling maiden met for an instant, when the former stooped to examine her fallen foe; next to scent her luckless cub. From the latter examination, it turned, however, with its eyes apparently emitting flashes of fire, its tail lashing its sides furiously, and its claws projecting inches from her broad feet. Miss Temple did not or could not move. Her hands were clasped in the attitude of prayer, but her eyes were still drawn to her terrible enemy—her cheeks were blanched to the whiteness of marble, and her lips were slightly separated with horror.

The moment seemed now to have arrived for the fatal termination, and the beautiful figure of Elizabeth was bowing meekly to the stroke, when a rustling of leaves behind seemed rather to mock than to meet her ears. "Hist! hist!" said a low voice, "stoop lower, gal; your bonnet hides the creater's head." It was rather the yielding of nature than a compliance with this unexpected order, that caused the head of our heroine to sink on her bosom; when she heard the report of the rifle; the whizzing of the bullet, and the enraged cries of the beast, who was rolling over on the earth biting its own flesh, and tearing the twigs and branches within its reach. At the next instant the form of the Leather-stocking rushed by her, and he called aloud--

"Come in Hector, come in, old fool; 'tis a hard-lived animal, and may jump agin."

Natty fearlessly maintained his position in front of the females, notwithstanding the violent bounds and threatening aspect of the wounded panther, which gave several indications of returning strength and ferocity, until his rifle was again loaded, when he stepped up to the enraged animal, and placing the muzzle close to its head, every spark of life was extinguished by the discharge.

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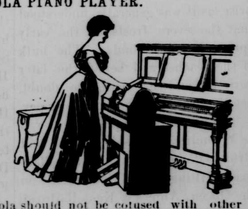

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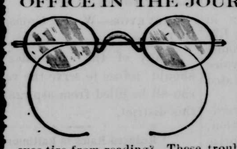

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TIME TABLE.—In Effect Sunday, June 14th, 1903.

EASTWARD.—Read Downward.

Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sunday.		Daily.	BALTIMORE FERRY SERVICE. STATIONS.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily.	Daily Ex. Saturday.	Saturday Only.	Saturday Only.	Sunday Only.
A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.		A. M.		A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	P. M.
9.00	3.15	4.00	2.00		7.00	Lv. Baltimore Ar.	9.30	11.40	10.20	9.00	2.00	9.20
11.20	5.05	6.20	3.50		8.55	Ar. Love Point Lv.	7.10	9.45	8.30	7.10	11.40	7.10
.....	6.05	.....	4.50		.....	Ar. Queenstown Lv.	.....	.....	7.00	6.10	.....	.....
A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.		A. M.		A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.

Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.	Saturday Only.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Tues., Thurs. and Sunday.	Railroad Division. STATIONS.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Monday Only.	Daily Ex. Sat. & Sun.	Tues., Thurs. and Sunday.	Saturday and Sunday.	Saturday Only.
P. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.		A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.
9.30	7.45	4.00	4.05	9.10	9.00	Lv. Love Point Ar.	9.35	9.45	8.20	8.25	7.00	11.34
9.38	7.53	.....	e 4.13	9.17	.....	Stevensville	9.26	.....	8.12	.....	6.52	11.26
9.42	7.57	.....	e 4.17	9.22	.....	Chester	9.22	.....	8.08	.....	6.47	11.22
f 9.45	f 8.02	.....	e 4.20	f 9.25	.....	Narrows	f 9.19	.....	f 8.05	.....	f 6.44	f 11.19
9.50	8.05	.....	e 4.25	9.29	.....	Winchester	9.14	.....	8.00	.....	6.38	11.14
f 9.53	f 8.09	.....	e 4.27	f 9.31	.....	Walsey	f 9.08	.....	f 7.57	.....	f 6.35	f 11.11
9.57	8.15	x 4.22	4.31	9.36	x 9.20	Queenstown	9.03	x 9.23	7.52	x 8.04	6.30	11.07
f10.01	f 8.20	.....	f 4.36	f 9.41	.....	Lv. Centreville Jct. Ar.	f 8.58	.....	f 7.47	.....	f 6.23	f 11.02
f10.08	f 8.27	.....	f 4.43	f 9.46	.....	Bloomingdale	f 8.52	.....	f 7.41	.....	f 6.18	f 10.56
f10.14	f 8.33	.....	f 4.48	f 9.51	.....	Wye Mills	f 8.46	.....	f 7.35	.....	f 6.12	f 10.50
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Willoughby	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	D. & C. Junction	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
10.22	8.43	x 4.42	4.56	9.58	x 9.39	Queen Anne	8.38	x 9.01	7.25	x 7.42	6.03	10.42
10.28	8.50	.....	5.02	10.04	.....	Downes	8.32	.....	7.20	.....	5.57	10.36
f10.31	f 8.53	.....	f 5.05	f10.07	.....	Tuckahoe	f 8.30	.....	f 7.17	.....	f 5.54	f10.33
10.37	9.00	x 4.55	5.11	10.13	x 9.50	Denton	8.24	x 8.50	7.12	x 7.30	5.48	10.27
10.43	9.07	.....	5.17	10.18	.....	Hobbs	8.18	.....	7.05	.....	5.43	10.21
10.52	9.11	.....	5.24	10.25	.....	Hickman	8.11	.....	6.58	.....	5.33	10.12
f10.55	f 9.18	.....	f 5.28	f10.29	.....	Adamsville	f 8.07	.....	f 6.54	.....	5.28	f10.09
f11.00	f 9.24	.....	f 5.33	f10.33	.....	Blanchard	f 8.03	.....	f 6.50	.....	f 5.22	f10.04
11.07	9.32	x 5.15	5.39	10.39	x 10.11	Greenwood	7.57	x 8.28	6.45	x 7.08	5.15	9.57
f11.13	f 9.40	.....	f 5.46	f10.46	.....	Owens	f 7.49	.....	f 6.35	.....	f 5.06	f 9.51
f11.18	f 9.45	.....	f 5.50	f10.50	.....	Oakley	f 7.44	.....	f 6.31	.....	f 5.01	f 9.46
11.25	9.53	x 5.30	5.58	10.57	x 10.25	Ellendale	7.37	x 8.14	6.24	x 6.54	4.53	9.39
f11.32	f10.02	.....	f 6.05	f11.04	.....	Wolfe	f 7.30	.....	f 6.16	.....	f 4.45	f 9.32
11.38	10.08	x 5.40	6.11	11.10	x 10.35	Milton	7.23	x 8.05	6.11	x 6.44	4.39	9.26
f11.46	f10.17	.....	f 6.19	f11.18	.....	Whitesboro	f 7.14	.....	f 6.02	.....	f 4.30	f 9.18
f11.48	f10.20	.....	f 6.21	f11.21	.....	Overbrook	f 7.11	.....	f 5.59	.....	f 4.27	f 9.16
11.57	10.29	.....	6.28	11.28	.....	Lewes	7.03	.....	5.52	.....	4.18	9.07
.....	.....	5.55	* 6.30	* 11.30	11.50	Lewes Pier	7.01	7.50	5.50	6.30	.....	9.05
12.15	10.47	6.19	6.54	11.51	11.14	Ar. Rehoboth Lv.	6.45	7.30	5.30	6.00	4.00	8.40
.....	.....	7.15	* 7.50	* 12.50	12.10	Ar. Cape May Lv.	.....	6.30	4.30	5.10	.....	7.50
A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.		A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.

CENTREVILLE BRANCH.

EASTWARD.—Read Downward.

STATIONS.	Distances from Balto.	Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.	Saturday Only.	Daily Ex. Saturday.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sat. & Sun.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sunday.
	Miles	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.
Queenstown Lv.	38.07	6.35	11.58	9.38	4.23	8.06	7.05	4.48	9.28	7.48
Centreville Jct.	38.90	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Briston	40.60	f 6.42	f12.05	f 9.45	f 4.40	f 8.13	f 7.10	f 4.53	f 9.45	f 7.55
Perlee	42.32	f 6.47	f12.10	f 9.50	f 4.45	f 8.18	f 7.15	f 5.00	f 9.50	f 8.00
Centreville Ar.	44.36	6.52	12.15	9.55	4.50	8.23	7.20	5.05	9.55	8.05
		P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.

WESTWARD.—Read Upward.

STATIONS.	Distances between Stations.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sat. & Sun.	Daily Ex. Sunday.	Daily Ex. Sat. & Sun.	Saturday Only.	Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.	Sunday Only.
	Miles	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.
Queenstown Ar.		6.51	8.53	2.48	5.29	7.54	4.17	7.59	10.32	6.39	7.49
Centreville Jct.	0.83	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Briston	1.50	f 6.28	f 8.45	f 2.40	f 5.23	f 7.43	f 4.10	f 7.53	f10.25	f 6.13	f 7.42
Perlee	1.72	f 6.24	f 8.40	f 2.35	f 5.19	f 7.38	f 4.05	f 7.49	f10.20	f 6.08	f 7.37
Centreville Lv.	1.94	6.20	8.35	2.30	5.15	7.33	4.00	7.45	10.15	6.03	7.32
		A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.

f Stops on signal to take on or let off passengers.
e Stops on signal to take on passengers for points east of Queenstown only.
x Stops on signal to take on or let off Cape May passengers only.

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Time Table subject to change without notice.

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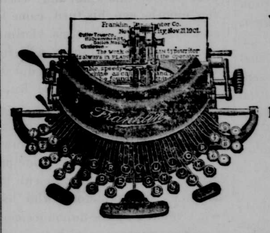

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2 50	6 35	Baltimore	11 23	6 55
3 20	7 40	Philadelphia	10 32	5 44
4 02	8 28	Wilmington	10 05	5 00
5 17	9 43	Clayton	8 50	3 45
5 26	9 52	Kenton	8 41	3 35
f 5 35	f 10 01	Hartley	f 8 32	f 3 26
f 5 37	f 10 03	Slaughter	f 8 30	f 3 24
5 44	10 10	Marydel	8 23	3 17
f 5 50	f 10 16	Henderson	f 8 17	f 3 11
f 5 56	f 10 22	Goldsboro	f 8 11	f 3 05
6 05	10 31	Greensboro	8 02	2 56
6 14	10 40	Ridgely	7 53	2 47
6 22	10 48	Queen Anne	7 44	2 38
f 6 31	f 10 57	Cordova	f 7 35	f 2 29
f 6 37	f 11 03	Chapel	f 7 29	f 2 23
6 49	11 15	Easton	7 20	2 14
f 7 03	f 11 29	Trappe	f 7 04	f 1 58
7 12	11 38	ar. Oxford lv.	6 55	1 49
P. M	A. M		A. M	P. M.

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