

learn. Grant might return any moment, so that his peril was imminent; and yet the audacity of the adventure gave it such spice that he lingered unwilling, as he was unable to frame an excuse for withdrawing.

"Your company does not go with the attacking party?" she said presently, as though it were something they both knew positively.

"No," he replied, catching the cue, but wondering which company was supposedly his, and for whom she had taken him.

"Major Grant told me you would go as the general's escort to receive and guard the prisoners."

"That sounds very tame after his own share in the work. Major Grant was surely born under a lucky star to be so favored as he is by Mars and the little blind god of love." There was a tone in his voice that she could not fail to understand, and she laughed coyly in answer. He ought to go, he knew; but still he lingered, and presently, urged on by the spirit of recklessness that possessed him, he said: "You have relatives in the South, Mistress Singleton?"

"Yes. How did you happen to know?" She turned toward him so abruptly that he was for a moment disconcerted.

"Why, it is not a government secret," he said, laughing.

"But you are not from the South, you are English. How should you know, and why should you think of it just at this time?"

She had scarcely looked at him before, being too busy watching the door of the banquet hall for Grant's return; but she had now lifted her eyes directly to his face. Discovery seemed imminent. Cursing himself inwardly, he hastily put up his hand to smother a pretended cough, thankful that the light was behind him. But her scrutiny continued.

"Captain Barry—" she said, with that in her voice that told him she was not quite satisfied.

"At your service—would that I could say forever," he said, putting all the ten-

derness possible in his voice, and clicking his heels in a low salute. Was everything over with him? Fool that he was to have tempted fate by such an allusion.

She pushed her chair back as though to rise, but at this moment there was a stir about the lighted doorway across the sward, and Grant came out. If he reached the pavilion before Richard found an excuse to retire his neck would pay the forfeit of his daring. He was thinking hard and fast. The girl sank back with a sigh of pleasure, her doubt of her companion momentarily forgotten in the joy of her lover's return.

"Your superior officer," she laughed softly and proudly.

"Yes," he replied, with that audacity which, even in danger, could not be quelled; "my superior in the ways of Cupid as well as in the ways of war, since against him I have no chance to win a smile from your lips. You will have much to say to him in these last moments—and Mistress Hamlin is going."

"You need not leave us," she said with half-hearted politeness; but already Grant was at the foot of the steps, and, with an audacious kiss upon the hand she held out to him, Richard turned, and, with a beating heart but no seeming haste, fell into the rear of the company across the pavilion, descending the steps so close behind them as to seem, to an onlooker, to be a member of the party. Every moment was precious to him, and yet he loitered along the lighted sward as if eternity were his. As he reached the corner of the building he heard Grant call:

"Barry, Barry!"

But he pretended not to hear, and sauntered on into the shadow. There his pace quickened. No one stopped him, for his military cloak completely disguised him, and presently he found himself near the landing. In an empty boat-house he cast aside his borrowed garment, and soon found Dunn near the barge at the appointed place of meeting. The old scout listened to his adventure with amazement not unmixed with anger.